

THIRTY YEARS OF PREHISTORIC ARCHAEOLOGY IN ARHEOLOŠKI VESTNIK

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Arheološki vestnik was the first specialized Slovene archaeological journal. It started not as a more or less expected result from the development of Slovene archaeological writing, which until that time had grown primarily within the framework of publications by museums and societies, but rather as something unexpectedly new. It must be said that the credit for the existence is mainly due to Professor J. Korošec, who at that time had just reorganised the archaeological department at the University, for the first time giving equal weight to prehistoric and early mediaeval archaeology, while at the same time he was the founder of the archaeological section, the present-day Institute of Archaeology, of the Slovene Academy of Sciences and Arts (SAZU); by this action archaeology was included in the programme of Slovenia's highest scientific institution, where today it still enjoys a firm place. This achievement must be stressed right at the start as now, after thirty years, it is already history and especially as, from the mere list of editors of the journal, this achievement is hardly discernible. Not from the first volume, where the editors were Korošec, Škerlj, Kastelic and the publisher was the archaeological department at the University, nor later when the SAZU took over the journal and the editors mentioned for the first ten volumes (after the sixth volume only on the covers) were Brodar, Korošec, Stele, Škerlj and as managing editor S. Brodar. Nor is it obvious from Korošec's bibliography in *Arheološki vestnik* 17, 1966, which is composed in such a way that we get from it no true picture of Professor Korošec. His action was considerable, not only because it represents a great leap forward in the development of Slovene archaeology but also because of the time at which he did it. At such an early period after the war archaeological journals with a great tradition were just beginning to revive — the same year saw the publication of the first issue of *Starinar* in Belgrade, *Vjesnik* in Split, *Germania* and *Berichte RGK* in Germany — while Korošec was beginning the publication of an archaeological journal completely from scratch, and that in Slovenia where, by the end of the war, any modest archaeological tradition that we had formerly enjoyed had been broken off.

And yet, through his creation, Korošec had planted a tree which today has grown into the chief spokesman for Slovene archaeology and which provides the most accu-



rate picture of what is happening. To look through its volumes is almost to trace the development of Slovene archaeology over the last thirty years as a whole.

An objective assessment of the work the journal has achieved cannot be made here, because of course it is still very much alive and is too close to us. So this article is something more of a personal review; in the first period — my interest mainly lies in prehistoric archaeology, except the Palaeolithic period and with stress on the metal periods — emphasis will be placed on the work of the two chief researchers, now both dead, Professor Korošec and Professor Starè, and in the second and third periods we will look at more general aims and aspirations, including those not yet realised.

In the thirty years that *Arheološki vestnik* has been published we can distinguish three periods which almost coincide with the decades of its publication. The first was Korošec's, up to and including the tenth volume, when he not only stopped being editor, but also stopped contributing to the journal; the second period lasted up to the 22nd volume, when the managing editors were S. Brodar and then F. Stele, and the co-editors for prehistoric archaeology were F. Starè (volume 11—12) and S. Gabrovec (volume 13—22); the third period was after this, with J. Šašel as chief editor and F. Stele, and then B. Grafenauer after Stele's death, as managing editor. These periods are marked by a balance in the extent of the journal as well. Korošec's volumes cover 3256 pages, the second period covered 3558 and the last (up to and including the 28th volume) 3445 pages.

If one reads again the preface to the first volume of *Arheološki vestnik*, which is undoubtedly by Korošec, then one can see that it is drily factual and practical with no long words and without any kind of visions. The journal was intended for publishing everything, even the smallest chance find, to prevent losing material in museum store rooms. It was to publish mostly shorter papers from the Palaeolithic to the early Middle Ages, also from ancillary sciences. In a word: it aimed to edit all material, old and new and especially from small sites and to present reports on new literature. Korošec had before his eyes a view of the standard type of archaeological journal which already existed in countries with a more active tradition of archaeological study. Or, more simply, he wanted to have a journal in which Slovene archaeologists could publish their current work, as immediately as possible. Thus he changed over in the seventh volume to four issues a year — a scheme which did not succeed, because four issues were never published within one year and also the eighth volume was already published as a single issue and two volumes — the ninth and tenth — were published as one.

The significance of Korošec's activity lay chiefly in his powers of organisation. Under the most difficult circumstances and in record time he first organised the Archaeology Department, where lectures on prehistory and early mediaeval archaeology were given for the first time in Yugoslavia, and then created out of nothing the Archaeology section in SAZU and an specialized journal. Korošec was primarily a man of action rather than of theory and therefore his almost pragmatic introduction to the first volume of *Arheološki vestnik* is understandable.

There are of course greater difficulties in assessing scientifically Korošec's first ten volumes. My view, as I already mentioned, is of course not complete and is limited to prehistoric archaeology. His work could be objectively assessed in its relationship to Slovene archaeological traditions and at the same time to Central European archaeology with which we have had the strongest links. In the first place it can be said that Korošec had no ties with Slovene archaeological traditions. He had not studied

in Slovenia and in his work felt no ties to the previous work of Slovene archaeologists. To this must be added the fact that B. Saria and R. Ložar left Slovenia after the war, nor did W. Schmid have any further contacts with Slovenia. The break was therefore complete. Links with Central European archaeology were also weak, except perhaps with Czechoslovakia (Korošec studied in Prague) where he profited most in early mediaeval (i. e. early Slavonic) archaeology. On the other hand it must be admitted that the great ideas of Central European prehistoric archaeology were undergoing a crisis. Menghin's inspiring *Weltgeschichte der Steinzeit* had already become part of history, as were his theories of a great migration of the Illyrian Lusatian culture, not to speak of his discredited ideas of political racism. What was more natural than in such a situation to go back to primary sources, to the material Korošec had been in close touch with, when on the other hand his whole nature was distrustful of broad sweeping ideas which often overlooked the material itself. Thus Korošec began his work without reference to the only great new Central European concept which had already been established by Merhart and his Marburg school. On the one hand Merhart had at that time not yet written all his fundamental works while on the other Korošec did not concern himself with those periods which the Merhart school chiefly dealt with. If he ever spoke of broader ties, he relied on G. Child, whose ideas he respected, and especially the latter's basic work *The Danube in Prehistory* (1929). Even this reliance was something new in Slovene archaeology. Korošec's return to material evidence, his desire to publish it as much and as quickly as possible were truly modern; not until much later in Europe did catalogue series and monographs with the publication of all finds begin to arise, and this Korošec had achieved right at the beginning, publishing his excavations at Ptuj as he went along. To this we must add his constant stimulation of his colleagues and pupils who followed him in this work. This aspiration of course hit at the heart of current needs in Slovene archaeology as our material had, to all intents and purposes, not been published at all.

Korošec consciously and sharply smashed any aesthetic view of material, by which only beautiful and precious finds should be published. His watchword was to publish everything, and at once, a motto which of course in many instances was problematic and unrealisable. It demands above all a good and proper organisation, which as yet we have not had. And of course: we must always publish a choice of material, and although it is true that that choice is not governed by aesthetics, there must always be some kind of yardstick, which is of course subjective, in spite of every wish for objectivity, just as the choice of material which comes to us is "subjective", i. e. more or less chance.

Above all, the realisation of what are basically sound and justifiable of material in its entirety runs us into technical problems and the rationalisation of publication. In both *Arheološki vestnik* has continuously improved and is still improving. In order to be convinced of this we need only look at Starč's publication of Hajdina in the first issue, or, even better, at Korošec's publication of prehistoric Ptuj castle and present-day publications. Much of the credit for this is owned to F. Starč, who introduced high quality archaeological drawing. The technique and rationalisation of a publication are still an ever present problem in archaeology of course, which, from excavation to publication, although a historical field, is linked to a whole series of natural sciences and technological concepts. The archaeologist must remain a historian and translate the results of sciences that aid him in his work into historian's language.

Today we can look back on and evaluate Korošec's ideas on prehistoric archaeology, which he established in his newly created organisational units and which were most fully expressed in *Arheološki vestnik*.

Coming from Belgrade and Sarajevo, Korošec turned our gaze to the Balkans which were completely neglected in Slovene archaeology until that time. Right at the beginning he proved himself to be our greatest expert on Balkan Neolithic and Eneolithic. He investigated it independently, from Ljubljana, and was chiefly instrumental in the discovery and establishment of Dalmatian Neolithic — the name and concept of the Danilo culture are Korošec's. He was the initiator of Neolithic research over the whole of Yugoslavia, as his legacy was then passed on to Garašanin, Benac, Batović, and Dimitrijević who formed a new synthesis in which Korošec's ideas were not always applicable but were always a fertile starting point for all post-war excavations. The same is true of Korošec's "Slavonian culture", in which he included the culture of the Ljubljansko barje marsh and Vučedol and provided new foundations for research into the Yugoslav Eneolithic. From Bosnia he produced the idea that the Slavonian culture may have lived on further into the Bronze Age and was one of the leading genetic components of the "Illyrian hillforts culture".

Because of this theory we can understand Korošec's learnings towards a low chronology, and also F. Starč's publication of Hajdina in the first issue of *Arheološki vestnik*. However this theory was not established, especially not at Ptuj itself, but it must be stressed that Benac's theory of the genesis of the Illyrians, with a primary phase of "preIllyrians" origination in the Balkans from a Neolithic substratum and a newly arrived level of Baden, or Kostolac (or Vučedol—Ljubljana) cultures, finds its basic tenets in Korošec's own theory.

On the Ljubljansko barje itself he revived field excavations and extended and differentiated his own earlier views. He discovered and established Slovene Neolithic as an Alpine facies of the Lengyel culture — although this view did not hold up in its entirety — and, in connection with his excavations in Dalmatia, he also discovered Neolithic with a trace of a Western Mediterranean element in the Slovene Littoral.

Although Korošec's specialisation in prehistoric archaeology was the Neolithic period, he made important contributions to later periods as well. Here I am not thinking only of his dating of some sites on the Ljubljansko barje to the Bronze Age (e. g. Blatna Brezovica) with no precise limits to their duration, but also of his discovery of Bronze Age graves at Turnišče and especially of the urn-field settlement at Ptuj castle. It is characteristic that Korošec did not use the term urn-field culture at all, even though excavations of this culture were at that time in the forefront of interest of Central European archaeology. But all this is less important. What is more important is that he started new investigations everywhere and published them immediately, giving them an immediate interpretation, which he often then changed and which was only later accepted, often in a modified form. But everywhere we gained new knowledge and made new discoveries which were essentially linked with his name.

We did often wish, it is true, that his writings were better executed and more polished, more weighed, with better documentation in his conclusions and more precision in his methodology. His definitions were often shown to be surprisingly exact but they were undocumented, unverifiable; you had to believe them but you could not check them. Because of this he has almost no pupils, in spite of the fact that the archaeology department was the leading archaeological school in Yugoslavia purely

through him. He was too individualistic and independent for that. We are all his pupils however, as we enjoy the fruits of his journal and his institute and even today we grapple with his ideas which he scattered rather than precisely formulated throughout his short life.

The emphasis of Slovene archaeology of course could not lie in the sector primarily studied by Korošec. This he knew himself from the very beginning and so he guided his first pupil, F. Starè, towards the Iron Age.

Starè wrote his first paper on Hajdina entirely as Korošec's pupil. It is essentially a disentanglement of the latter's idea on the meeting of the Slavonian and Illyrian cultures. But already in his dissertation *Prazgodovinske Vače* Starè leaned profitably on Slovene archaeological tradition, especially on Ložar, who had attracted him with his theory that forms developed even in our part of the prehistoric world, while later he also adopted ideas which had been introduced into Slovene art history by Izidor Cankar. So F. Stele names Starè and Ložar as the two who introduced the views of the Cankar school into archaeology. Starè's dissertation is the best characterisation of Slovene Iron Age archaeology in over fifty years and also tells us most about the author himself. It was written at a time when we were not yet linked to modern trend, especially the Merhart school, nor with the foreign museums which stored our material. So it was limited to local material, there was as yet no fruitful collaboration with Vienna. In this enclosed atmosphere the dissertation was written using methods which to all practical purposes were already outdated and yet his main results were surprisingly accurate. The merit of Starè's talent and intuition was that he knew how to overcome the weaknesses of a methodology which had remained basically typological. In any event Kossack was still able to include his chronology, with a few changes, in his own chronological concept which was reached by a different method. Because his concepts and methods were no longer modern, Starè did not create a school; his chronological classifications were believable but were not executed in a modern way and were not verifiable.

At the same time as the dissertation was written Starè turned to an appreciation of objects using art history criteria, which was close to his own nature and temperament. From this direction came his studies on belt buckles (*Arh. vest.* 4, 1953) and especially his habilitation thesis on metal vessels in Slovenia. In this he was already leaning on Merhart but more on his results than his methods. It was characteristic even for this direction of his research that he began with typology, with an analysis of style, while the treatment of chronology and motif was promised for a second part (which he never wrote). From the point of view of methodology this is the wrong way round.

During his one year's study in Germany, in Munich and Marburg, the centres of the Merhart school, F. Starè came to know its methods well. New knowledge influenced him so that he not only broadened his research interests to include the urn-field culture — the results of this were his excavations in Dobova and his two excellent studies on crescentic razors (*Arh. vest.* 8, 1957) and on grave 108 in Dobova (*Situla* 1, 1960) — but he also turned to new methods. How different was his approach to the material now can be seen by comparison of the two above-mentioned studies with his work on Hajdina and on Ljubljana. The new direction of the two studies would certainly have produced more valuable results if, shortly after that, his incredible drive — 3 books of his were published in 1954 alone — had not ceased. In his following papers he returned to an art history evaluation of material and finally to

a synthesis of the whole. In both directions he was most original, full of brilliant observations, but it can be felt how these arose without contact with any new specialist knowledge and that, especially in his last book, he was too bold in his questions, which cannot be answered by this form of archeological material at all. If it is difficult to follow him along this path, in spite of all our admiration of individual observations, we must nevertheless be grateful to him for posing the right questions and finding stylistic solutions, for his search for synthesis, for his valuable observations, for his triumphs of description and the technical side of the subject, for his warnings not to allow archaeology to be reduced to statistics and classification but at the same time we are warned that when we speak as archaeologists we must stay within the bounds of the possibilities of our field.

With this short attempt at a description of Starè's work we have already passed beyond the boundary of the first ten volumes of *Arheološki vestnik*. We can conclude: in prehistoric archaeology it bore the stamp of Korošec and Starè. After initially following the same route their paths diverged and they went in different directions. Similarity remained in the individuality of their paths in that neither could submit to the strict methodology of modern research and the discipline of collaborative work. Thus their colleagues sought their own methodological solutions elsewhere. After the war Korošec was the leading light of Yugoslav archaeology, the only one able to give any direction to prehistoric archaeology. Leading Yugoslav prehistorians studied for their doctorates with him. He was also the only Slovene who regarded the whole of Yugoslavia as territory for research which he knew thoroughly from Slovenia to Macedonia. In contrast to this his anchorage in the wider context of Slovene culture was weaker. His power lay in new discoveries, in his excellent knowledge of the material and less in his systematic and methodical treatment of it.

The small, 11th and 12th volumes, published as one, of *Arheološki vestnik* were an outward sign of the crisis which arose on Korošec's departure from the editorship and the cessation of his contributions. The journal overcame this crisis with the publication of colloquia which the Slovene Archeological Society began to organise and earlier, with the *Festschrift* to Brodar and the publication of papers given on the Slovene day of the VIth congress of the Yugoslav Archaeological Society in Ljubljana. Both, the organisation and publication of the colloquia, were of course no mere chance. They represented a fruitful reaction to the previous work of leading archaeological institutions. This can already be seen by the fact that the colloquia were organised by a society and not by any institute. The reaction lay mainly in the wish for more organised work in the subject which none of the leading institutions knew how to or could carry out. So the idea of an Archaeological Map, which Korošec had already planned, was revived and moved into a new phase, while the idea was born that individual colloquia could provide a systematic survey of the state of research in individual periods. This now included a survey of the course of past investigations, which Korošec and Starè had no time for in their own powerful individuality. It was also necessary to take into account a new network of organisation in Slovene archaeology. In principle *Varstvo spomenikov* (*Preservation of Monuments*) took over the publishing of "every, even the smallest, chance find", as is written in the preface to the first volume, together with initial reports on every excavation, while on the other hand the National Museum's *Katalogi in monografije* (*Catalogues and Monographs*) took on the publication of the material from large, complex sites, both old and new. Special mention must be made here of the fundamental task of publishing the material

discovered by Pečnik; both that which stayed at home and which is kept in foreign museums so that, after nearly 100 years, we can at last have a good overview of Pečnik's legacy. Analytical studies of material, originally published separately, were now included in the catalogue — Vače, for example, was originally published as a separate catalogue and a separate monograph. Thus in the sixties — again, characteristically, more under the auspices of the Slovene Archaeological Society than of official institutions — a coordinated network of archaeological publications was projected. *Arheološki vestnik* was to be at the centre of this. Freed from small, chance finds and the preliminary reports of excavations not yet scientifically studied on the one hand and from large complexes on the other, it was to keep its interesting heterogeneity and deal with themes of burning interest but in an organised way, thereby giving Slovene archaeology a direction, helping it to realise its plans of research and critically evaluating them. Although Korošec fought against an "aesthetic" attitude in archaeology and advocated the publication of every find, even chance finds, it is nevertheless also true that not every find is of equal historical significance and importance. When studying material it is obvious that we look for historically most important objects. It is also clear that there will be shifts in the views on the "importance" of material, shifts in the questions raised by the finds. This represents an important part in the development of a subject and the journal at the centre of activity can encourage and aid this. On the other hand it would be very dangerous to become enclosed within a narrow circle. Thus a journal must keep us critically informed on the state of archaeology in surrounding regions especially those with which we are geographically linked and which share the same archaeological problems. On the other hand we must not be closed to our own Slovene scientific and cultural centre. Here I am thinking of cooperation with scientific and technical fields on the one hand and with humanist subjects on the other. In the history of our subjects such collaboration has been natural as all archaeologists came from other, related fields, either from natural sciences or history and philology. A generation is now emerging which has come from pure archaeology, and which at the same time has appeared at a period of specialisation. Any narrowness of outlook would be especially disastrous. Although archaeology often has to make use of technical and scientific methods, it remains an integral part of Slovene history and a part of Slovene culture.

How has prehistoric archaeology succeeded in the second and third decades of *Arheološki vestnik*? Mention must first be made of the growth of the purely technical side of published papers. New standards of drawing have become established which have considerably increased the significance and extent of material published. With the publication of colloquia archaeology has defined its problems, produced new, crucial material and everywhere created a useful starting point for further work, greatly simplified by the publication of *Arheološka najdišča Slovenije (Archaeological Sites in Slovenia)* in 1975. The volumes containing the published colloquia are certainly crucial issues of *Arheološki vestnik* during these years. They were so well received that the majority were instantly sold out, a rare event for a scientific publication. At the same time the systematic publication of old sites continued, in so far as they were suitable for the journal, as well as reports on current excavations. A series of thematic studies was also published, in which the Slovene Hallstatt phenomenon and its relationship to surrounding regions was at the forefront of interest. Now for the first time we became the best experts and interpreters of our own material. This had already been true of

Korošec and the Neolithic, but now, through the colloquia, it was true of other periods as well. It must be stressed that our syntheses and interpretations were also accepted in the wider scientific world outside.

As a whole, however, with the departure of Korošec prehistoric archaeology perhaps lost the leading place in *Arheološki vestnik* which it had enjoyed in Korošec's decade. After his departure there was certainly much less Neolithic archaeology, which now, perhaps not most appropriately, is concentrated in the publication of the archaeology department at the University (*Poročilo o raziskovanju neolita in eneolita v Sloveniji; The Report on Neolithic and Eneolithic Research in Slovenia*).

Arheološki vestnik has not only accompanied and recorded the growth of Slovene archaeology but has also made it at all possible. Although it was an organ of the Academy, it has never been a closed journal but was always the platform of Slovene archaeology as a whole. In the first decade this was the work of Prof. Korošec, in the second it was mainly due to the Slovene Archaeological Society. Nor was it closed to modern currents in the field. Our archaeologists have always sought contact with modern archaeological trends in Central European and Yugoslav centres while foreign archaeologists have always willingly contributed to the journal. The publication of material has grown in significance as well as in technique and rationalisation and above all in systematization. We have taken stock of all periods and shown them in all aspects. In contrast with other, national, humanistic subjects which have a greater tradition, a tradition has just begun to be established in archaeology. Perhaps the greatest achievement of *Arheološki vestnik* lies in the fact that now, after thirty years, we can say that that tradition is already before us, in its first outlines. We are not talking here of some rigid direction which is so dangerous for a small nation but of an openness towards its own centre of interest, especially to the younger generation and also towards its wider surroundings, in Yugoslavia, as was so fruitfully initiated by Korošec, and abroad, without which no science, especially archaeology, can flourish. These links must be kept fresh with regular critical surveys of the achievements of archaeology in neighbouring countries and with critical evaluations of new methods.

It is of course vital to improve a good, critical relationship towards ourselves. Our own work remains almost completely without any critical assessment. Although the lack of proper criticism is not a fault of archaeology alone, it is no less harmful for that. Our place in Slovene historiography and culture is also insufficient. A characteristic indication of this is that almost the only synthesis of Slovene prehistory is the work of a historian (B. Grafenauer, *Zgodovina slovenskega naroda*, I; *The History of the Slovene Nation*, I). We can look in vain for archaeological contributions to established cultural series, such as those published by Slovenska Matica. It is also a fact that the majority of popular archaeological books which flood the market today are not by Slovene authors. Certainly *Arheološki vestnik*, as a strictly specialised, scientific journal, is not responsible for all this, but it is nevertheless probably right to mention it in this jubilee article.