

World Peace And Legacy Of B. Wongar³

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This paper examines the work of a Serbian-Australian writer B. Wongar and explores traditional Serbian and Australian Aboriginal cultures that were both impacted by similar political structures. Wongar's work is compared to the opus of Yukio Mishima, who in post-nuclear Japan pledged to respect the ethical values despite the enforced modernization. Wongar's renounced novel *Raki* received particular recognition for accomplishing something that had never been attempted in literature before: creation of a symbolic bridge between Serbian and Australian Aboriginal cultures.

Is it acceptable to consider someone who writes in English language under Aboriginal name B. Wongar a Serbian writer? Sreten Božić alias B. Wongar, who was born in 1923 in the Serbian mountainous village Gornja Tresnjevica and nowadays is probably one of the most important Serbian writers in the beginning of third millennium, writes in English. This might appear confusing at first; however it does showcase that particular trace in history where freedom of Serbian literature had a chance to thrive due to ideologies promoted by both conquerors and liberators. Truth be told, Sreten Božić was very determined to make himself a literate person, to adopt all the cultural significance embedded in written heritage and then to start to write in Serbian. However the Second World War broke out and the soldiers during his very first day at classroom took away his teachers and their three children who never ever returned into his village again. A replacement teacher was found but even though the soldiers didn't drive off with her this time, they killed her in the classroom in front of the pupils. After that experience Božić developed a strong distasteful towards cultures built on literacy alone. In the next four years, there was not a single teacher who would enter that school. Consequently Božić was left alone with no other source of inspiration but his genuinely bright mind and spoken legacy which was undoubtedly good enough to bring forth a future writer.

Milutin Milanković, a world famous author of *Canon of Insolation* dedicated to solving the secret of Ice Ages, had a similar experience. Living in different circumstances at the end of the XIX century in Slavonia,⁴ he did not attend elementary school due to his illness so he had a chance to observe and explore the world around him in his own way. When he started attending secondary school, Réálka⁵ in Osijek,

³ University of Belgrade. Project 178018 *Social crises and contemporary Serbian literature*. (Ministry of Education and Science of Republic of Serbia)

⁴ Province of Austro-Hungary at the bank of Danube with Serbian majority

⁵ Old kind of secondary school in which modern languages and sciences are stressed.

he was surprised how effortless it was for him to learn new material while all of his classmates seemed to struggle with it. He also grew up on Serbian spoken legacy, especially touched by heroic character Marko Kraljević, legendary knight who fought against Turkish imperial oppression. The story of Marko left such a strong emotional imprint on the young Milutin's soul that the last paper he wrote before his death was dedicated to this particular hero. Having no burden of scholastic or of erudite illiteracy he developed a mathematical mind that created heliocentric theory of the climate change that is confirmed more and more as time goes by.

It is impossible to compare Milanković and Wongar simply because Milanković has university degree from Polytechnics, Vienna, while Wongar was self-thought. Even though they are different when it comes to their formal education and social status, they are still similar when it comes to their knowledge of Serbian legacy and the energy they acquired through Serbian upbringing, epic poetry, traditional wisdom and metaphors. Touched utterly by epic narrating of his father,⁶ Milanković cherished Marko Kraljević all his life, Marko's slavery and then freedom from Turkish prison shackles served as an inspiration to him to stand up alone against whole contemporary science, which was going astray rejecting astronomic theory of the climate change. On the other side, Wongar believes that he learned all important things in life from the traditional poetry: ethics and esthetics, history and skills.⁷ This knowledge acquired from the history on Serbian culture was brought to Australia and incorporated in all Wongar's work despite all the hardship he encountered over the years. Milanković and Wongar both succeeded to form and achieve their own creative aim simply because they consciously or subconsciously relied on Serbian culture heritage that had been conveyed to them in the elementary school and through spoken legacy of their fathers.

Milanković's father Milan as "the member of the assembly in eparchy and archdiocese of Karlovci and political leader of Serbs plowmen in Dalj, Belo Brdo, and Borovo",⁸ praised and defended with passion Serbian culture heritage in all of his public speeches and publi-

⁶ I devoured every word of the song and turned up my soul into it and things which by it so vividly depicted. When story comes to the moment when it tells that Marko was brought to the king, as he was killed by the humidity of old walls and faded like the stone itself, my eyes were brimming with tears that I barely died down...and father began to re-read the poem. I permeated again even with greater participation. When father comes to that critical moment I clench my teeth but couldn't stop the torrent of tears. Father looked at me reproachfully but I gave a sign more by my hands than moaning voice just to read on... The next day father at my request read the same poem twice with my proper sobbing. The day after I told him how I knew the whole poem by heart: I had checked myself last night in the bed... For the short time I knew by heart yet these poems: *Uroš and Mrnjavičevići, Death of Prince Marko, Czar Lazar and Empress Milica*. These are, with the first one, the four best poems of our folk traditional poetry, works of true poetic genius. "(Milutin Milanković, *Memories, Experiences and Knowledge*, The Agency for Textbooks, Beograd 2009 p 87)"

⁷ Responding to a letter by the writer of this text, Sreten Božić says: "Your words about my writing as reflections of our epic poetry are the highest award that a writer can get."

⁸ Part of the Austria Hungary in that time.

cations in Serbian bulletins. Habsburg dynasty attempted to carry out a school reform *sub speciae progressis* within the Serbian community, but he rejected it in one of his papers (probably 1874), where Milan Milanković unambiguously said that “ this law takes away the liberal thinking right and also the justice, thus, by these reasons, we cannot bow to this law as an incarnation of justice... Serbs cannot apply this law, with all zeal of civic love for the common good, because this law, maybe inadvertently, runs towards denying use of Cyrillic alphabet and Serbian minority ... and it attacks all autonomy of Serbs in our homeland...”⁹

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Dream and World Peace

Similarly to the Milanković family, Sreten's father, Stevan Božić, took upon himself to educate his son. “My father Stevan was a talented speaker. While we worked a field, he liked to talk about what happened in the world since the biblical times till present. This probably motivated me to start writing,” says Wongar.¹⁰ Sreten's brother, Milosav, in his book *Gloomy Serbian Immigration Selected Stories* talks about their father in a similar manner.¹¹ Writing is not something casual or marginal to the life occurrences for Milosav either. While he holds a trowel in one hand at construction sites in Australian bush, he is with a pen in other hand ready to write. “For already two decades I'm collecting and writing down adventures and tragedies of Serbian immigrants who were scattered all over the globe during and after wars.” He spent two decades on writing his book and that shows us how serious he is about being a writer. Although he is not formally literate, his text is enriched with marvelously high level of contemplativeness, knowledge, examination, deduction and interpretation of objects around him. The lack of the formal school education probably freed his mind allowing it go deeper into the matter in a way that is unfamiliar to scholars.

Essentially Milanković family manages to preserve its intellectual capacity through generations that delivered writers, philosophers, lawyers, engineers. Spiritualism was unavoidable and completely practical for Serbian families through centuries no matter which bank of river Sava they lived on.¹² The lack of formal education was balanced by the depth of spiritual heritage and by spiritual overcoming of mere rationalism. As his son witnessed, Stevan Božić was in the dreamy state his entire life, balancing between myth and reality. Probably the most thrilling part of the above mentioned book by Milosav Božić is dedicated to his father's dream:

⁹ Letter by Milan Milanković, Archive of the Serbian Academy of Science and Arts, 10.131/III boxes 8-23

¹⁰ Sreten Božić - B. Wongar, *Koraci* (Steps), XLIV 9-10 2010 p 206

¹¹ In original: Milosav Božić, *Žalosne srpske emigrantske odabrane priče*. It is an unpublished manuscript completed in 1988. Mr. Vladeta Kolarević, an ethnologist and writer from village Brezovac, which borders Wongar's native village Gornja Trešnjevica, showed me the text.

¹² The river Sava was border between Austria - Hungary and the Kingdom of Serbia

“In military service during 1912 in city of Kragujevac camp one evening I was in the bed reading my most favorite book *Scriptures*. And when the military trumpet announced time to sleep and the soldier on duty turned off the lights I put the book under the pillow and fell asleep. That night I received the news of what awaits me and what role a Serbian soldier will have to play in the following war. I dreamt that night a handsome, bearded man with his name Rodney written on a lapel. He held a Holy Scripture in one hand, and with the other one he showed me a well-known chapter of the Revelation of John, where it said: *The Angel flew, and was given to him to untie the four angels who were tied to the great river Euphrates.*”

Rodney explained these four angels to be four states: Serbia, Montenegro, Greece and Bulgaria. “You will go to war together against Turkish Empire, will win and untie yourselves forever from Turkey. The God will give the Balkan league the power and key to open the door of the horrible Judgment Day. The Balkan War will condition and cause the World War. This First World War will bring immense suffering and destruction on the land; Second World War will be an extension of the first one, and the third world war – extension of the second. A Judgment Day and all three world wars will start with Balkan League and Serbian soldier. After the third world war the God will organize upon his particular wish an empire on the land, a United Nations government will rule and whole world will be like one big village... The military trumpet that announced wake up separated me from this holly man.” At that same day the newspapers in Serbia wrote about the Trade Treaty between Serbia and Turkey. People still did not know anything about the war that was knocking on their door.

Rodney visited Stevan in his dreams throughout his life revealing the future events that lied ahead on the path of his personal life, the life of the state and even the world. Rodney notified Stevan of the death of the king Aleksandar Karadjordjević. Stevan wrote a letter to the king Aleksandar informing him of the death that would happen to him in France. But, the Crown Counsel decided not to deliver the letter to avoid worrying the king and keeping him from visiting France. They took the letter as simple nonsense fantasies of a crazy villager. After King Aleksandar Karadjordjević's assassination in Marseilles in 1934, Stevan Božić inquired the court about acknowledgement receipt of the letter.

Those in charge of the mail office argued that the Crown Counsel did not deliver the letter to the king because they were nervous that such unpleasant news, which came for a villager's dream, would be considered worthy of his attention. Stevan Božić through his lawyer Čeda Plečević pressed charges against the Court Counsel quoting that the Counsel prevented him from saving the king Aleksandar's life. The lawyer Čeda Plečević from Arandjelovac and Stevan Božić, the plowman from Gornja Trešnjevica, became helpless against the Court Board and its lawyers.¹³ The letter sent by Stevan Božić that proved the

¹³ The lawyer Čeda Plečević has been assassinated by communists in the city of Mladenovac in 1941.

tragedy and death of the king before he died, disappeared out of the court mail archive.”

This dream seemed to be important enough to be written in the Jung’s *Red Book*, as well as the events that preceded and followed it, outlining the vast spiritual scope of the Božić family.¹⁴ Wanting to convince myself of unusual Milosav’s story-telling credibility I have addressed my inquiry to Sreten who, on December 21, 2010, informed me, among other things, that: “Father dreamt this somewhere after 1930 as far as I know. He was concerned about the war repeats which probably was caused by great suffering he had gone through in the war 1912 – 1918. In one of his dreams he saw the king Aleksandar’s assassination, while in the other one he saw the king inspecting the army while his epaulet was half cut – insight that the Kingdom will tear apart and the “land across” (Vojvodina, northern part of Serbia) will secede. We belonged to the Danube banovina¹⁵ at the time and it was not possible to imagine secession.

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In my autobiography I have not mentioned his dreams because it was written for English readers. Mentioning this could look like some kind of superstitious rural environment where I had grown up. I have limited my work to our traditional epic poetry which has art recognition. While I have lived in the village I took care of livestock. Even today I live with a pack of wild dogs – dingoes. The animals have perfect memory, as well as a premonition of what can happen to them. The science has not discovered the heart of this matter but if such genuine instinct is in existence in animals than maybe this instinct appeared with my father as his dreams. It’s a pity I haven’t thought about this while he was alive.”

It seems that there is no need to suspect the inscription by Milosav Božić.¹⁶ However, a dream in the Enlightened Age of modern culture is not accepted as a comprehensive source. Božić, being fully aware of this, doesn’t wish to create an additional clash with ruling force of the world. Crucial misunderstanding between native and colonial cultures runs just on the border line that separates dream and reality. Christian missionaries left numerous inscriptions of their own rage because native people make all important decisions based on dreams

¹⁴ “The years...when I pursued the inner images, were the most important time of my life. Everything else is to be derived from this. It began at that time, and the later details hardly matter anymore. My entire life consisted in elaborating what had burst forth from the unconscious and flooded me like an enigmatic stream and threatened to break me. That was the stuff and material for more than only one life. Everything later was merely the outer classification, scientific elaboration, and the integration into life. But the numinous beginning, which contained everything, was then.” K. G. Jung, *Red Book*, Barnes & Noble 2009

¹⁵ A regional unit ruled by *ban*

¹⁶ In his letter of January 7, 2010 Sreten Božić writes to me: “I knew of my father’s dreams – the majority of what he had dreamt. At home that has been understood as something private and talked about whispering. I guess for restraint not to allow the villagers to misjudge it. About his dream of the king assassination he was more open. He was unsatisfied that the Administration at the time did not understand him. He talked about with our mother sometimes who followed him in all that matter.”

not rational thinking. It was dream rather than social hierarchy that served as a basis for all decision making; it is not surprising why native people had built and developed completely different communities.

Since native people rely on individuals as the sources of symbols found in their dreams, they are unable to identify how often they refuse to obey rational orders and explanations of the colonizers when they make decisions. It remains out of reach for the conquerors making practically impossible for them to truly colonize native people. By exterminating native people, conquerors actually wanted to uproot dreams and man's orientation towards free source of self-consciousness. Today our dreams are successfully colonized by visual media which agonizes our subconscious though artificial images, although even that kind of colonization is of a limited scope.¹⁷

No doubt Stevan Božić knows how to fight for the truth of a dream. The dream has no past or future; it includes life in the eternal present. Through his dream he does make an effort to interfere with historical world, but he is met with indifference because these two spheres can hardly co-exist in our rationally subjugated world. He did not prevent the assassination of the king and he couldn't change the course of the events that followed. History, as always, turned against the one who had tried to change it based solely on a dream.

Stevan Božić made another desperate step attempting to change the course of history after the Second World War. When city of Kragujevac, in the Central Serbia, was liberated, new authorities organized mass rally and invited Stevan to address the citizens. "Father thanked Russians for the liberation of the city and said when the National Parliament in Belgrade started to work the first law to pass should be death sentence repeal since too many of us Serbs were killed in the war. This turned on arguing and disagreement among the audience so the general in charge dispelled the gathering. Several weeks later, father was declared to be a *peasant-enemy*." Such attitude is not welcomed by any authorities and drumhead-trials and mass death sentences were prepared all over Serbia for the sake of glory of the new power who won the war. Did Stevan foresee events? Was it something he saw in his dreams? Regardless what was the source of his vision, his discontent provoked the authorities and led to the three years of imprisonment.

Stevan's indigenous liberal idea of civil rights could not be accepted in totalitarian society. He sees that these colonialists of ideology, under the veil of liberation, will do the same as all conquerors do with defeated people. He sees villagers all over the country murdered with no trials because of the revenge or prosaic property robbery. Mass murders, like ideological plague, spread all over the country under the guise of social justice. The ideology of chosen race propagandized by German Nazism was simply changed with the idea of the new superman, Marshal Tito, who was allotted Nietzsche's attributes of omnis-

¹⁷ The most successful philosophical account with dream is Cartesian rationalism that brings down reality to Ego that thinks. Ego does not dream, actually it can not establish reality if dreams itself which is the main characteristic of natives. By thinking Ego stays divided of the world, contrary to dreaming when it finds the unity which is destroyed by rationalism.

ciency, omnipotence, wisdom... He was Zarathustra of brotherhood of unity and socialism triumph. What was looking like liberation from Nazism initially appeared very soon as mere ideological disguise of conquest and usurpation of the country. New laws were made and the Superman deprived all institutes of legal state. Many important individuals perished overnight in mass murders that didn't spare anyone, wiping out everyone starting from university professors to mere laborers.

This is the moment when Stevan come out with Kant's idea of "World Peace" and death penalty abolition in order to prove, probably alone against all, the existence of moral perception and vision which no regime can destroy. But as such, regime can throw him in jail, what in fact happened not only once but four times because regime considered his proposition as hostile to its unlimited political self-sufficient will. Stevan bore this with no grumble, knowing he had done everything he could. With clean conscience he went to his world of dreams and conveyed the message to his sons. B. Wongars literature has ramified from that seed; Wongar became the one "who brings the message".¹⁸

Sreten didn't need anything else to learn about the world, history or social relations. It was enough he knew his father's life. Also he did not need to read Kafka, as he said in an interview, because he knew the faith of his uncle. His conflict with a communistic official, while he worked in newspapers in Titovo Užice, just repeated his family's history and contributed to understand it even better. The horror seems to have been so terrible that Sreten left the country in the early sixties of the previous century carrying nothing, crossing Alps by foot and coming to France which he had envisioned as a promising land. He fled from death, evil, and horror wishing to reach happier world where people are not incited and where respect for life existed, which had been advocated by his father as well. Indeed in France, the war winner de Gaulle failed to initiate mass killing of Marshal Petain supporters. Both, de Gaulle and Tito were politically sponsored by British (same as Mussolini and the Croatian fascist leader Pavelić), but the first one had enough decency and civic culture not to act as the Superman.

Quest for Arcadia

In fact Wongar's journey as an immigrant is a deeply frightened child's pursuit of a country with no evil. An attempt to find a mythical Arcadia in this world where shepherds graze their herds freely having no fear that someone will come to "liberate" them. So much shudder he felt in the war and horror he heard from his father prompted him to leave searching for a happy country that must exist and where evil does not harm the life.¹⁹ First stop on his road was France; happy coun-

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¹⁸ Zoran Jeremić, One Who Brings the Message, *Vešti* (News) October 22, 2010 p 6.

¹⁹ "While in Yugoslavia I had an illusion that the West was the land of milk and honey. Watching theatre performances written by Arthur Miller I was thrilled with no understanding it was a brutal society where one of thousand is successful; speaking about writers then one of million." Nikola Škondrić, *Serb among Aborigines*, *Monopolišt*, year 12 No 56 p 37

try of rich people and of great culture, but this illusion disappeared shortly after he saw how this culture uses force on insurgent Algerians, throwing them alive off the bridge into the river, and how racism flourishes on beautiful streets of Paris.

Sreten realized this was not that promised country he had hoped to find. When he came he was immediately thrown into the hell of the underground world in the Renault car factory. Then he found himself in the middle of the state persecution of foreigners. He was scared stiff that he, as swarthy, could be replaced as the Algerian and thrown back into the dungeon from which he hoped he had fled while leaving Yugoslavia. "France was in chaos. About one half a million Algerian internees lived in Paris. I tried to learn French well to be able to explain I was not Algerian if police arrested me. For two years I mastered language so well that I even intended to write in French. I mixed up with advanced people who were against the war and gathered together in the square near the Museum of Man. Here I met Sartre and Simon de Beauvoir, and here, in this ethnographic museum I met for the first time the culture of Australian Aborigines. In Paris I met Beckett who helped me also to publish my novel later. However, I dreamed it would be nice to leave Europe and go somewhere, half a world away, where there was peace."²⁰

Even though after the St. Bartholomew's night and the French Revolution, the French did not indeed capture and kill their own countrymen, they did it to strangers. Maybe this was better than what Serbs did to themselves under the guise of liberation. It certainly was not the Promised Land Arcadia where shepherds and shepherdess may wander the fields with no fear. This vision of Arcadia with its long disappeared shepherds may seem outdated today since they all were destroyed by the ideology of a better life. The ideology that did nothing but endlessly promise better life and future until the life itself disappeared. It is not difficult to grasp the dialectics of such a method – ideal life is the one that is gone.

Sreten Božić could only find moments of relief during his conversation with Sartre and Simon de Beauvoir. These moments he felt like he finally escapes from the grey life routine as foreign worker. The strength to elevate spiritually and emotionally from the bottom of the Renault basement, no doubt came from Simon de Beauvoir and Sartre. Sreten drew his inspiration from his world of dreams. This is the same world where his father's strength attempting to change the history originated from. He was apparently convincing enough for Sartre and de Beauvoir to later decide to publish his work in *Les Temps Modernes*. Herewith, he also points out how aware he was about his life calling. It was first and foremost a quest for the Promised Land and only then writing. It is maybe surprising that a barely literate worker sees writing as his vocation, but it is just because we do not grasp that writing is only a knoll to infinite horizon of the contemplation.

Sreten was banished from France by the same horror that had exiled him from Yugoslavia. He felt that the same slavery was waiting

²⁰ Zoran Jeremić, *One Who Brings the Message*, *Vešti* (News), October 22, 2010 p 7

for him. Taking the risk, he decided to leave France and go to the very end of the world, to Australia. He thought there must be a place, in this uninhabited continent, for unrestricted moving and unfettered creativity in pastoral idyll. If his belief fails him again at the end of the world far away from the greed and chaos in Europe, then the whole world is truly at its end.

Once he reached the Australian shores, Sreten very soon learned that he was truly “at the end of the world”. Božić very soon became aware that the British imperial culture, knowing that none could see this so far away, has come to conquer the “shepherds’ life” of Ab-origines so fundamentally, comprehensively and irrevocably that in comparison to them the prosecution of Algerians in France and drumhead-trials by Yugoslavian Superman Tito looked like dilettantism. The whole Australia was a Gulag and the masters of the island carried out this destruction with meticulousness, leading it to the root and to the very notion of humanity. They denied shepherds and shepherdess were humans and they were applying all methods that entire enlightened world reserved for animals. Aborigines were ruined as chimerical creatures, half human half animal, as a fruit of some mistake of evolutionary engineering which had to be wiped out to allow true race, white one, to expand and usurp all that exists. This destruction of the humanity concept itself was certainly embedded in a scientific theory of evolution which assumes the existence of “lower” and “higher” life forms and supposedly all the rest was just a technical completion. The supposition was to destroy “lower” forms as soon as possible that “higher” could spread. Thomas Huxley, the intellectual father of Darwin and factual creator of the concept of the evolution, claimed that dark skinned man could compete with white only in biting²¹ while was writing in confidence to his wife Henrietta that by Friday all would accept his theory of the evolution.²²

Mass destruction, the holocaust of Jews, Russians, Serbs, and Gypsies, in the Second World War as well as military defeat of Nazism did not bring at the table any questioning of the evolution theory and its responsibility for mapping the idea of “lower” and “higher” species into the social theory. Once established this distinction crossed imagined border line between theory of nature and theory of society to influence human affairs in many ways. Hitler’s rhetoric questions about “higher race” with no doubt originated from H. S. Chamberlain and his evolu-

²¹ “No rational man, cognizant of the facts, believes that the average Negro is equal ... of the white man. And if this be true, it is simply incredible that, when all his disabilities are removed ... he will be able to compete successfully with his bigger-brained and smaller-jawed rival, in a contest which is to be carried out by thoughts and by bites.” Huxley wrote this closely after the Civil War in States when black slaves had been liberated. Thomas Huxley, *Lay Sermons, Addresses and Reviews*, New York, Appleton 1871 p 20

²² In the letter to wife Henrietta March 22, 1861: “My working men stick by me wonderfully, the house being fuller then ever laſt night. By next Friday evening they will all be convinced that they are monkeys”. Huxley L., *Life and Letters of Thomas Henry Huxley*, Macmillan, London 1900.

tionism interpreted as social that is moved by a struggle between races. This is a step back even from caste system which was designed just to prevent the evolution. It seems that after all reforms, India had been aware to which extent evolution was necessarily associated with social disorder and violence. There is caste system in India but not “higher” and “lower” species for allowing evolution get justification. Therefore, there was never any clash in India that could be compared to the hell in Europe.

After the Second World War nuclear testing began in Australia under the guise of scientific experiments and took place in reservations where Aborigines lived; even though British considered Australia as the Crown property and not Aboriginal. Surveying uranium they have cleared the forest away and destroyed surrounding nature, poisoned soil and water...²³ This was much larger than genocide, all-out assault on the life itself, true apocalypse that dived with all its horror on the people who had no power to defend, no willingness to reject own heritage on behalf of the progress culture, nor any desire to replace own faith with Christian. Why after all this waited to happen to the end of the world? Is it possible that it hadn't happen yet?²⁴ British declared Australia as the land without people and they have turned that country into the land of St. John's Revelation, a desert for their nuclear testing. Sreten experienced precisely things that make him run away from Serbia and Europe. But now he had nowhere to go again, he had to take a fight for he had already arrived to the end of the world.²⁵

It seems like someone out of the dream world prepared him for this struggle at the edge of the world by the strange plan described vividly in his autobiography. Božić had gone through complete initiation in Australian desert Tanami.²⁶ Guburu, an Aboriginal man, found him

²³ Even UNESCO delivered agreement for the Cacadu reservation, which had been enlisted as the World Natural Heritage, to turn it into mining area.

²⁴ There are constant expectations of the end of the world today. These became usual and almost regular since every several years the end is expected under various excuses. It seems the end is more expected than the New Year's Eve. The end of the world rituals expand because of history concept fatigue as imposed by the West on one hand, and on the other consequently to hide the fact that the killing of the world is permanent; the world is pushed to its end on daily basis, to the edge of human abyss; and it is actually disappeared in essential ethic and comprehensive sense. Instead, the virtual world appeared as imposed by all means in which truth and lie are synonyms, in which we live pretending, write pretending, gather together pretending... Only death left as real which is very well visible at the largest industries which are dealing with manufacturing and delivering the death. Since globalization is embedded in technological power of the virtual world its single reality is the creativity of death. Wongar warns of this in his own authentic way. This is why he is in full sense of meaning the messenger of an alien world.

²⁵ “It is a disaster for writer if doesn't write in mother tongue. During the day I worked and at nights wrote. I didn't have time for sleeping. During several visits my friends in Belgrade advised me to stop dreaming about writing in English language. They used to say that big writer as Crnjanski did not succeed. But, Crnjanski had a place to come back and I had to persist.” (Nikola Škondrić, *Srbini među Aboridžinima* {A Serb among Aborigines}, *Monopolist* year 12 No 56 p 37)

²⁶ See Wongar's autobiography – *Dingoes Den*, Imprint 1999.

in a nearly dead state and even though he had all reasons to leave a white man to die, he helped him to start living again. That's how Božić became Wongar, a herald from another world, dream world; he lived together with Aborigines for nearly a decade. He was the first one who found courage to speak openly about nuclear testing and its nightmarish consequences to the native world and its culture that continued to last for at least two thousand generations. It is clear in his novels that Aborigines were at fault mainly because of their wish to preserve own culture and way of life, to be free, and because the evolution did not transmit them from black to white. The only thing they could be accused of when facing the conquerors was the fact they were strict guardians of all those resources which British greedily considered as the source of power. As a first step Wongar made photographs exposing horrifying life and poverty of the indigenous tribes. Then he started to write irrepressibly with piercing determination, dedication, and faith. All this made it possible for laborer at Australian bush to become famous all over the world. He went secretly to forbidden territory writing about strictly forbidden theme of nuclear testing and he risked to be sentenced to forty years of imprisonment which was threatened for those who disturb public order. Despite all this, he photographed blind people, children, and Aborigines who died of cancer caused by uranium effects that also destroyed native villages. He made an archive of several thousand photographs. At some moment he wrote to Beckett he was watching every day *Waiting for Godot* and he sent him a photograph of a blind black woman leading by dingo to drink the water from muddy pond. He demanded the abolition of the death sentence for Aborigines, same as his father asked for Serbs at the end of Second World War. Thus he proceeded on where his father left over, but by some miracle, maybe because he had been declared a messenger, he did not drink from the same cup. All Wongar's family we know about from inscriptions has been led by a dream that gave all of them steady determination and ingenuity. Wongar's work is almost a psychoanalysis of culture, research of the depth of regress of collective subconscious, the description of insane violence of neurotic manifestations.

Wongar's non-violent noble struggle against the conquerors, who have reclaimed everything they wanted: the native land, memory, children, resources, is in many ways reminiscent of Gandhi's conflict with the very same conquerors in India. A photograph of Gandhi was published in 1930 where he took one salt grain from the sea. British had prohibited Indian to access the Indian Ocean shores – they supposed not to exploit salt because that right had been given to some British company according to the British law. Gandhi was declared as enemy by this act but in spite of consequences he defended his matter of freedom. Wongar did the same when he went to the Arnhem Land in spite of the prohibition adding a grain of salt in unsalted ruling history. Wongar never stops adding that grain of salt as a passionate activist spreading a word about horrifying consequences of nuclear testing and radioactive pollution. He did not hesitate to speak about

it in public in neither Australia nor in Serbia. It was never hard for him to write comments for the news and internet sites whenever the word about thousand tons of depleted uranium dropped on Serbia is mentioned. "Finally, the public in Serbia became aware of catastrophic consequences of depleted uranium for health. Americans perfected this weapon in the Australian desert at the end of the war in Vietnam (about 1972) when it was too late for that battlefield. The Alliance dropped depleted uranium missiles during the first war against Iraq. Depleted uranium is a nuclear weapon! It was the first time that it was used in Europe against Serbs in Bosnia and in Serbia. Projectiles with depleted uranium (DU) initially were tested on Aborigines in Australia and Australian soldiers. About ten thousand soldiers played a part in these experiments. Majority of them died of the radiation effect and their descendants are ill too. I am honorary member of the Veterans Association that struggles for the reparations at the court. I have written a book about these victims titled *Totem and Ore* published by Dingo Books 2007. There is a chapter about bombing Serbs as the biggest felony that happened in Europe since the Ace Age. The next two thousand generations of Serbs will be exposed to the radiation thus the casualty's number will be way bigger than the holocaust."²⁷

Herewith all doubts of close historical destiny of Aborigines and Serbs are dispelled. If someone suspects the similarity is more theoretical or the fruit of writer's imagination, then he/she will have to think hard of the fact that these nations were exposed to the most horrifying effect of the nuclear weapon and lethal radioactivity in the wars and conquerors raids. Wongar was conscientious enough to ask himself if it was a random fact that the same nuclear weapon rages both of his countries. Serbs are the same as Aborigines in conquerors concept of the world and they would like gladly to see Serbia as well as Australia as *terra nullius*, i.e. a land with no people. Consequently, Japanese and Iraqis should join this alliance, to get complete and clear picture about the nature of social and historical development embedded in progress of the evolution driven by modern technologies.

Wongar and Mishima

The aim of the employment of nuclear technologies is just a present day variation of old conquerors' concept of battle against the dream world. Explosions of atomic bombs have not been aimed to fight against an imaginary enemy but to erase memory, reject legacy, destroy national life, and showcase complete adherence to the modernization ideology. Aborigines, Japanese, Iraqis and Serbs largely lost their national memory under the pressure of modernization. They experience difficulties while trying to discern contours of their own identity. Hence Wongar's work can be even better outlined when

²⁷ Newspaper *Politika* online, February 2, 2009

compared to creativity of the Japanese writer Yukio Mishima. Linking these two writers' works has historical and cultural validation because of the immense quantities of lethal nuclear bombs dropped in Japan, Australia, and Serbia. Bombs with depleted uranium were thrown on the sacred sites in these countries. There was enough of depleted uranium not only to take people's lives but also destroy their culture. Both Mishima and Wongar unmistakably expressed a desire to overcome this through the evolution concept of the life itself.²⁸

They were born around the same time (Mishima was born in 1925). As boys they both had the opportunity to watch huge frenzy of evil during the Second World War. Both were raised on traditional knowledge. Mishima's grandmother Natsuko Hiroaka taught her grandson the great spirit of their samurai ancestors who emphasized self discipline and commitment to ethical values in life. They both write under pseudonyms: Mishima to split from his mates and Wongar to highlight that he has undergone his initiation and died for the world without dreams. But what connects them the most is the feeling that their literature is not sufficient and they must go free in their own worlds – Wongar into the world of Aboriginal tribes, and Mishima into the world of Samurai. Wongar went to live together with Aborigines against the law in Australia, and Mishima organized his own private army.

In his first story, *The Forest in Full Bloom*, Mishima feels that ancestors live inside us. Wongar mentions this constantly while following Aborigines experience. Both of them are aware of the problem of cultural heritage uprooting and its replacement with surrogates that cover the concept of evolutionary progress and modernization. They both try to make a change and reveal the age of discoveries as fake and take off the five centuries long veil of colonization of the world; to reveal the culture of those who had given themselves a mission to discover the others until they stay hidden behind their rhetoric of improvement, development, and progress as just euphemism for spreading and deepening slavery. The last area to be colonized entirely and inhabited by the slaves of illusion is social freedom. Wongar reveals for us the truth of the lost generations, kidnapped and converted into something they are not, modified towards invaders, and sacrificed on the altar of modernity with deleted memory.

The social contract was first time broken towards the indigenous communities. Now no community, national or non-national, has any right to sovereignty any more. All communities are subjects of global idea that points proudly to the power of modern technology

²⁸ "Anavari however knew life was a chain of laws that bind all those whose faith is to participate in the mutual agreement of all kinds, under and over the ground, to live together or not to live at all. When time comes for one ring in chain to snap, then death will release like sand avalanche covering and dumping all others. Men are not excluded from this agreement and to believe tribal elders even rocks are the part of this plan although so hard to outlive so many men at the end time, the sun, and atmosphere effects grind them into dust." (B. Wongar, *Karan*, Dodd, Mead 1985)

as a source of legitimacy of its own government. But Mishima very simply tells us how this modern superficial concept is worthless. “As long as they live, industrialists will never grasp the simple fact that an article only acquires value as it gradually becomes old, obsolete, and useless. Antiques are the only valuable things – old things, traditional things.”²⁹ His point is quite simple – having too much is the same as having nothing. Mishima despises swaggering modernity as an apology of colonial culture, as continuity of American revenge on Japan for their resistance in the Second World War and he reads it as certain confinement of the traditional culture, as an injury of life, and creation of blame for existence itself. He tells all about this in his wonderful novel *Golden Pavilion*. This temple in Kyoto is named golden because it was so perfect and so above the people, that a dedicated monk who served in it was challenged to burn it because he wanted to defend life from overwhelming image of perfection in comparison to which entire life looked like crippled, mute, and unable to flow.

Wongar is also sentient that the perfect weapon of destruction, nuclear modernization, has no ethic code. This modernization tends to destroy as much life as possible using the threat of untouchable superiority at all times. That is why he defends Serbian heritage and traditional epic poems of Serbian heroes glaring at golden pavilion of modern technocracy that shines in its glow of apocalyptic power while Mishima is dedicated to the samurai tradition and the Bushido code. Such mindset is a crucial defense system for freedom.

Raki – a Bridge to the End of the World

“In Melbourne in print magazine appeared *Smoke Signals* engaged in Aborigines protection. In 1969 they published my report about immense bauxite mine in the reservation that was opened by a Swiss company without the consent from Aborigines. The Aborigines Festival was organized in Canberra and I have prepared an exhibition of photographs and testimonies I had collected. Thus Australian Parliament Library was interested in the material because there has been a debate in progress about Aborigines. My material ought to be an evidence of discrimination but parliamentarians have decided to close my exhibition and to forbid it. My archive was confiscated and authorities forbade me to speak in public about nuclear experiments. I had negatives which enabled me to save two thousand photographs. I began to publish books. After my *Nuclear Trilogy* was issue, the police force

²⁹ Yukio Mishima, *Death in the Midsummer and Other Stories*, New Directions Publishing Company, New York 1966 p 131. Mishima has gone to the end and he committed seppuku to tell us explicitly how our submission to Golden Pavilion and utopian evolutionary development leads directly to death. Wongar acted similarly because he exposed himself to the court prosecution writing about the forbidden subject of nuclear modernization of the Aboriginal land that will stay radioactive till the end of the world as well as Japan after Fukushima. Both of them were disputed and suppressed in contemporary Japanese and Australian world of literature. This illustrates simply the fact that remarkable movie by Paul Schroeder Mishima was withheld from the film festival in Tokyo and never released in Japan, and regarding Wongar, the fact is he was exposed to oppression at home and could not publish any novel of his until he was published abroad.

controls became more methodical in nature and were happening more often. They used to make raids in my house and at the farm and my manuscript of an uncompleted novel *Raki* was seized. The police have never ever brought it back to me. I had to re-write it again.”³⁰

It is not at all an easy task for writer to re-write a lost novel. But on the other hand, a re-written novel is a spiritual rebirth, which seems to repeat Wongar’s re-birth in the desert. Thus *Raki* is not only a novel of his, but his life novel as well. A writer could not wish anything better for his novels than for them to repeat their life course.

Raki is composed of two biographies. The first one in Trešnjevica where Sreten Božić had been born and second one in Australia where B. Wongar was created. Yet two works should not prevent us from recognizing two histories as the same story.³¹ The story that speaks of the evil that had been vandalizing the world for many centuries; of evil deluge that consumed people, their minds and souls, same as entire nations and continents. It leaves behind a desert of empty glances, soulless greed, and superficial selfishness. Writing about events in Serbia and Australia, the writer gives us a possibility to grasp the evil deprived of seductive differentiation of its spatial and temporal occurrences. In two parts of the world, Serbia and Australia, people are tied by almost unbreakable yarns and they experience invaders that kidnap their eternal freedom in the present and replace it by the concept of time and evolution driven by some force independent of the man obliging life to expand from “lower” to “higher” and forbidding it to return ever again to where it originated.

Main character in the novel *Raki* is hemp. It seems the writer wishes to say that man is not anymore a protagonist; after all he did, it is better that he leaves an imaginary evolution stage to more powerful creatures such as plants. Hemp was chosen as subject because it is at deepest misunderstanding with technology world. Presently, it is disreputable plant which doctors takes as a drug that changes mind. In the past, hemp was the base of traditional life because it was convenient for weaving clothing and fabrics, making herbal drinks, oil and food. More importantly ropes were made from it, without which it would be impossible to imagine national economy. We have forgotten that paper for Bible used to be made of hemp until 1883 and even American Declaration of Independence has been written on hemp paper imported from Netherlands. Hemp used to give a solid woof to a rural community and firm correlation, securing its production of life cycle. In the sense of myth, hemp links havens and earth and thus protects and sustains life. Just because of solid harmony given to the community, Wongar indicates intention of the evil to control hemp as a vital point of the life cycle that should be cut to spin a thread of unbreakable non-freedom.

In the novel hemp thus bears double meaning. It is the soul of the world considering the myth, the *axis mundi* which links havens and earth. At the same time it is a metaphor for evil rope, chained servitude,

³⁰ Zoran Jeremić, *One Who Brings the Message*, *Vesti* (News), October 22, 2010 p 8

³¹ Aleksandar Petrović, *Two Histories and One Story*, *Koraci* (Steps) XLIV 9-10 2010 p 5

tyranny that attempts to erase memory of how to grow and use hemp and instead tries to demonize it as well as the nations that grow it. Reading the hemp destiny writer summarizes true strategy of evil which can be satisfied only by extermination of those who live in harmony.

In first part of the novel, Father and Mother attempt to protect hemp from Turkish and German usurper authorities which want to supervise the production of hemp and to suppress peasants who fully rely on the power of hemp. Here he depicts a true nightmarish farce in which community life is eradicated in so many ways that Turkish obliteration and German destruction interfere with genocide by Ustasha.³² It is interesting that extraterrestrial beings play a part in historical events equally as beings of this world. This does not go in recognizable mannerism of “science fiction reality” but quite innate, in harmony with mythical reality. In this reality the narrative subject, the Cartesian Ego that tells stories and interprets various objects, is completely dissolved. The subject in myth does not recognize the ego and non-ego division and it does not divide time into past and future. All time categories are eternal present and the subject does not separate itself from the rest of the world, neither reality nor dream. A blind fiddle player in the first part of novel can't realize how to make difference between medieval Turkish and modern German occupation since the outcome was the same in both ages when Serbs were slaves in their own country. These divisions in time and space in view of the Fiddle Clairvoyant cannot brake the hemp nor divide the truth on various “conditions”, “circumstances” and “historical ages”.

The writer places second part of the novel in Australia trying to fully merge what was separated before then. Hemp drama is also in the act here as an attempt to govern its creative power in other circumstances in the prison in the middle of the Australian desert. Under the watchful eye of the prison guards, The Mother was forced to till the prison yard and to force hemp to grow over the night, to throw it out of its natural rhythm so to eradicate it easily. The final solution had been prepared in Australia and later applied in Europe. The higher Aryan race concept is just an echo of the very same concept of the higher white race and Aboriginal subhuman.

Therefore, in the novel there is one more character, in addition to hemp, that links two deceptively separated ages and even more deceptively separated spaces. That is Dr. Kurt Waldheim, an officer of the German SS units in Second World War in the first part of the novel, and in second part, the Secretary General of UN after the War. Therefore it is sensible to conclude that the first part of the novel takes place in the first half of the last century and the second part in the second half of the last century. This should be taken conditionally because Wongar plays with time and space which doesn't mean much to him, same as to Aborigines whose life is ruled by the perpetual return to the same.

Waldheim's appearance in two spaces and times is filled with the

³² Pro – fascist collaborators in Second World War in Croatia

immense horror of the realization that war never ends. The evoking evil of war restores, and like a ghost puts on various uniforms to pursue those who survived last war.³³ The reader can almost physically feel the evil, realize its constant nature despite of different shapes it takes to always and with equally immense desire to hurt, humiliate, oppress and destroy life. If we ask what evil is per se, we would actually find that it is all that is not life or that is posted out of life.

This is why *Raki* sharpens the sense for evil very well. In the novel, where dead and alive participate equally; Wongar with full consciousness depicts a chain of evil by which people are tied through space and time. He watched the evil puzzle eye to eye in both Serbia and Australia, so he successfully connected its various demonstrations in one global evil that had thrown the people out of their dream world and landed them to the field of modernization to march in tact with progress embedded in the evolution theory.³⁴

Through such type of narration reader can sense an advancement of the essential way out of the problem of evil. At first place it means to abandon conquering Cartesian subject who is supposed to learn about the world but during this cognitive process it perceives life from perspective of a dead body. A concept of Descartes' Ego, who assumes the existence reasoning itself, is embedded in the eager necessity to colonize the others as irrevocable articulation of European egoism. Wongar allowed us to attend his dissection course of this colonizing subject who almost eliminated Aboriginal non-subjective altruistic culture, in another words reduced about six hundred native languages to almost one. It is only one ego left, my own ego; only one language, my own language; only one culture, my own culture; only one religion, my own religion which of course has no room left for other and others.

While writing this novel Wongar obviously bore in mind something else other than his career. After he opened theme of nuclear testing in Australia, he became also the first novelist who broth into the prose a theme of Dr. Waldheim. He explores this character as a symbol of universal evil in disguise of various human and humanitarian roles.

³³ "She sighed again, explaining that the new war is just as ugly as the last one. A whole group of young had been found beheaded and mutilated in our village – unable to be recognized even by their own mothers. She must have sensed that I was going to ask who beheaded them, and told me that the man who raided our village during the Second World War was around again. 'He now wears different clothes and a white helmet'. I wanted to remind her that the raiding of the village had happened a whole lifetime ago and the SS officer who headed that raid would be too old to wear a uniform any longer, but she said: 'Man like him hangs around forever'. She explained that during the last war only a handful of people from our village survived: 'Lucky you were among them'". (B. Wongar, *Raki*, Maryon Boyars, New York, 1997, p. 19)

³⁴ Artist Dragan Papić in a letter of February 7, 2011 warned me that "there is no progress in the nature. Progress is not natural and its origin is out of nature. No one living species has progress, amoebae Ladybirds, or sharks, except the man. The progress is metaphysics of life. It takes different ideological faces that always gathered together round the principal of the loan (capital) to leave life in deficit. The reality of progress is given by the nature itself of intelligence and it is a final consequence of entropic process that had awakened life."

Waldheim certainly did not become a chair person of the global institution on his own³⁵ so this makes it clear why Wongar's novels were confiscated, exhibitions banned, and friends of Waldheim from the world of literature assaulted him that his identity was false that he could not speak as an Aborigine.³⁶ The message states that in fact, not only Wongar, but none can speak as an Aborigine, the least of all Aborigines themselves, whose voice had been restrained long ago. Although Wongar is read, universities hesitate to include his work into any syllabus: they do not want to interpret him because the evil is so bare in his opus that is no single leaf left to cover it anymore.

Wongar in fact dreamt a large dream of Serbian culture in Australian nightmare. That dream is about freedom and only writers like Wongar place into agenda the question of freedom again today. Smiling illusion of progress, selfish and superficial, is not able to move further than *cultus postumum* ("end of history") because this concept is not planned enough to determine its mission and vision other than idolatry to itself. The real problem means that exhausting pace of modernization has brought everything to complete obsolescence. First of all, the man alone is anachronous because the modernization pressure becomes unbearable for his anthropological capacity. Not only Aboriginal languages and natural diversity vanish in their country, but the whole world is in the game of perish.

While the modernization ideologists still invite us to hound without breath the wheel that moves forward, the man deprives himself of vital qualities. The time-saving machines produce the situation in which no one has time anymore. Intelligent machines make possible for someone to grasp something scarcely, mass media (mediators) that direct relations hardly exist... The products are out of date even before they appear, personal relations are out of date because the family is sacrificed to permanently growing desires, state is out of date because of unrestrained selfishness of corporations. White colonizers were up to punish whole world while punishing Aborigines. In one word, we alone create relations as a burden we are not able to bear and that is the integral secret of the modernization achievement. Serbs and Aborigines' destiny is in front of us to grasp, it is completely uncovered in Wongar's novel. An old scholastic question – Can God create a stone which he cannot lift? – so far has found its final anthropological answer – God cannot, but man can. This has been a main Wongar's legacy – don't let man make a stone which he cannot lift. It is a true ground of World Peace.

Edited by Nikol Markovi & Anastassia Pronsky-Stojanovic

³⁵ At the beginning of his global political career he was decorated by Marshal Tito in 1973 and at the end of 1994 by the Pope Johan Paul II.

³⁶ "After *Raki* has been printed in English language I received a letter by the editor of famous publishing house in Berlin who informed me they had been thrilled reading the novel and decided to translate it to German. There supposed to be an agreement signed for copy rights but instead, two months later the same person informed me they had given up to print the book and he resigned. I phoned to the agent in Berlin and he told me that the editor was fired – the owner of that publishing house was the war friend of Kurt Waldheim." (B. Wongar, *Koraci* (Steps) XLIX 9/10).