



## **Serbia at the dawn of 2020**

### **Report of a Listening Post held in Belgrade on 25th January 2020**

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#### **PART 1: THE SHARING OF PREOCCUPATIONS AND EXPERIENCES**

*In this part, the Listening Post participants were invited to identify, contribute, and explore their experiences in their various social roles, be they: in work, unemployed or retired; as members of religious, political, neighborhood, voluntary or leisure organizations; or as members of families and communities. This part was largely concerned with what might be called, 'the stuff of people's everyday lives': the 'socio' or 'external' world of participants.*

The workshop was well attended, over 60 participants from different towns, professions, age, gender, political orientation. It started with a dream of one participant about window and tarpaulin, which was put by her father and was making the room dark. She decided to move the tarpaulin and when she moved it she saw beautiful sea sight, the light came in and illuminated her and the room. Then she was amazed by that extraordinary experience.

Immediately, an association of Montenegro came up, which was followed by the dream about the prayer in the church which illuminated frescos. The more the prayer was stronger, the more frescos were visible. All of a sudden the prayer was so strong that he could clearly see how huge the temple was, even bigger than Aya Sofia. He then realized that the prayer is coming from the soul and he could hear his steps and he saw huge doors which led into the Belgrade with sky crepes, but he decides to stay in the temple. After that, pictures of different churches of Byzantine style emerged, like churches of Saint Donat in Zadar and church Saint Vitale in Ravenna.

Association of Turks leaving Atos immersed, and a legend about how that happened was told by one of the participants. Participants then started to associate on the stairs which led to the tomb of Christ and the picture of The Tower of Babel as representation of human efforts to build something.

There was a dream about the bus with young people who were leaving Serbia,

in search for a better future. Participants were anxious and there was questioning whether to leave or stay here, and is it safe to raise kids in our own country. Furthermore participants were worried because of current air pollution in Belgrade, which was the worlds most air polluted city for few weeks. One of participants shared her frightening experience of plane landing on Belgrade airport, and the Belgrade sight from the plane, which, to her, looked like it was covered whit milky fog, thick white layer of pollution.

One of participants then remembered an interview of Serbian light designer and her words that “Belgrade is a landfill of garbage light” which started discussion about new year’s lightning in Belgrade and people were frustrated by amount of money that was spent on it. One of the participants stated that she liked those lights and decorations and she would rather be illuminated by any kind of light then to be in dark. Further, participants were discussing which light is better, artificial or natural, and where one can find the light: inside or outside? Image of Tesla emerged from further dialog, and respect for his work.

## **PART 2: IDENTIFICATION OF MAJOR THEMES**

*In Part 2, the aim collectively was to identify the major themes emerging from Part 1.*

The group was asked to separate into smaller working groups to try to identify the major themes that had emerged spontaneously during part one. Then a spokesman from each supported with others from group shared with the whole group and we clustered them in several main themes:

**Theme 1:** Fog and pollution of mental and physical spaces as well as relationships and communication.

**Theme 2:** Sources of light and spirituality, inner and outer.

**Theme3:** Recycling and transformation of garbage

**Theme 4:** Importance of local initiative work

### **PART 3: ANALYSIS AND HYPOTHESIS FORMATION**

*In Part 3, the participants were working with the information resulting from Parts 1 & 2, with a view to collectively identifying the underlying dynamics both conscious and unconscious that may be predominant at the time; and developing hypotheses as to why they might be occurring at that moment. Here, participants were working more with what might be called their 'psycho' or 'internal' world: their collective ideas and ways of thinking that both determine how they perceive the external realities and shape their actions towards them.*

**Hypothesis 1: Transformation of pollution and fog in societies and in ourselves is possible with gathering of people through small local initiatives, different kind of communities and using various resources for recycling.**

**Analysis of hypothesis 1:** There was free floating anxiety about current air pollution and fog in Belgrade, some of the members feared for their future and the groups were constantly putting effort to find some guiding light which would lead them throughout fog and tunnels of uncertainty. Voice of small local initiatives was raised, and members were willing to hear it. Examples of protecting natural environment, like Rakina Bara, found their place in matrix, which was pointed as local as well as global problem. Hope was found in idea of connecting communities, people and organizations who are dealing with similar problems.

**Hypothesis 2: There is a tendency to ignore global problems until they become our personal.**

**Analysis of hypothesis 2:** One of the participants gave her own example of how she became president of house council in her building, only after the water which was coming from the rotten roof came to her apartment which was located on first floor of the building. Only then, she was willing to engage in solving the mutual problem. There was a participant who worked and wrote about air pollution in Serbia, for 25 years, and seems like nobody cared about it, she was angry because no one was interested in it before, and now people are asking her for advice and solutions. Question arose about to what extent do we believe in each others work, and are we open enough to hear each other.

**Hypothesis 3: It is more easier to be in position of "either or" as a way through the fog of not- knowing then to be opened to experience.**

**Analysis of hypothesis 3:** One of the groups noticed that for the majority of

time, discussion was leading to opposed ideas and views of reality, rather than being open to the unknown and richness of diversities which could appear. There was idea that position of duality could bring us about bitterness. Throughout entire discussion opposed concepts of spiritual/material; brightness/darkness; inner/ outer as well as relation/ alienation were appearing.

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