



# Archaeological Bodies

Who speaks, who does not and how does that give meaning to what we are listening to?

Archaeological Bodies examined individual and collective constructions in relation to identity, while investigating the way we ask questions and the answers they can produce.

*Lava-Dansproduktion* (Sweden) and *Kulturanova* (Serbia) collaborated in this project that was directed towards looking at the position of the Hungarian minorities in the province of Vojvodina in relation to the Serbian majority and aimed at young people, youth workers and young artists in this region. The project took off in May 2014 and finished in July 2015 with a performance at the Gallery of the Cultural Centre in Temerin.

Before the start of the project there were several problems identified, concerning inter-ethnic relations and regional reconciliation that are especially affecting young people:

- Cultural diversity is often not viewed as positive value in Serbia and there are

no continuous programs addressing the issues of negative stereotypes, prejudices and discrimination towards different ethnic groups.

- Young people have low tolerance to different ethnic groups, especially towards minority groups from neighboring countries, which could be explained by insufficient opportunities for young people to meet and cooperate with their peers from other ethnic backgrounds that would help discover common values, heritage and history.

At the core of the project lay four capacity building workshops in the field of movement, video and text production. At the end of the last session in July 2015 we created an installation/exhibition with movement, video and text material that was presented in the Gallery of the Cultural Centre of Temerin. In 2014 the project took place in Novi Sad at Fabrika ([www.skcms.org](http://www.skcms.org)), for the second part of the project in 2015 we moved to Temerin, a small town some 30 km north of Novi Sad. The artistic side of the project was directed by Sybrig Dokter and Nadja Voorham. In Novi Sad the 2014 edition of the project was managed by Milan Vracar of *Kultura-nova*. In 2015 for the 2nd edition Ivana Jerkov (formerly from KZM Temerin) joined forces as assisting project manager. During the second part of the project we had Dénes Varga from Temerin, as an observer, present at both workshops in 2015, and Arif Kornweitz who gave a short introduction in Conflict Resolution during the first workshop in 2015. Both have written an article about their experiences and observations; Dénes Varga gives an overview of the history of the province of Vojvodina and shares his observations about the two working periods in 2015, while Arif Kornweitz speaks about his lectures during the workshop in May 2015 and comments on the videos that the participants made in conjunction with the interviews they held. The videos record the answers on the question: When would you leave your home, leaving everything and everyone behind? The thought behind this question was to stimulate thinking about when one thinks one should act or when one actually acts in response to injustice. Do we wait until it touches ourselves or do we also decide to undertake action when others are affected? How do we identify those circumstances? It turned out that the way this question was interpreted was quite different than we anticipated, as Arif Kornweitz remarks in his report.

The participants we worked with were youth workers, young artists or art students, teachers, choreographers and activist, the material we worked with during the workshops was designed to be useful in peoples individual and professional practices after the project. Both in 2014 and 2015 the participants of the workshops conducted interviews with people about the current situation in regards to

the living in a multi-ethnic society and issues connected to identity. The interviews were conducted and filmed by the participants of the project. They should be read as a dialogue or a text where each of the participants has a particular role. The questions asked are as significant as the answers. What is said (or asked) can be thought of as equally important as what is not said or asked. For the interviews conducted in 2014 we got in touch with our interviewees through KZM, the youth club in Temerin. In 2015 KZM no longer play a similar role in Temerin and was unable to help us. Interviewees were found through several connections but it was unexpectedly difficult to find people willing to participate. From different people we understood that the general climate in Temerin had become more passive, people are less engaged and less culturally active. Municipal politics and the general economic crisis seem to lie at the bottom of this situation. The need for this type of project became all the more obvious.

*“The greatest significance of projects like these can be found in the impact made on the participants themselves. Becoming richer with new content and personal development makes it worthwhile, especially when they transfer it, and through it influence their surroundings. They not only learnt something new about others, but also about themselves. With the newfound and self-acquired knowledge about identity, group dynamics and conflicts, they continue their journeys, applying it in their everyday life, social interactions and activities.”* (Dénes Varga)

In this publication you can find fragments of some of the interviews. More information and a complete version of the interviews can be found on the website: [www.archaeologicalbodies.org](http://www.archaeologicalbodies.org)

**SYBRIG DOKTER**

*Lava-Dansproduktion*, Stockholm, 3 October 2015

## **Background to the project**

Despite the present cultural diversity in Serbia (out of the total population of 7.5 million 800,000 people in Serbia declare themselves as members of national and ethnic minorities), there is insufficient knowledge about different cultures and ethnic groups, even in multi-ethnic communities and regions (like Vojvodina), which forms a strong base for developing stereotypes and prejudices leading to segregation and discrimination. It even leads to sporadic incidents motivated by national or religious hatred in all parts of Serbia, as well as to the existence and engagement of a number of neo-nazi organizations and groups. The actors in those incidents and members of neo-nazi groups are to a large extent young people.

The research on attitudes of secondary school students in Serbia show that a great percentage has a high, ethnically motivated distance towards people belonging to different national groups. Vojvodina is an autonomous province of Serbia, located in the northern part of the country. It has a population of about 2 million (approximately 28% of Serbia's total). It has a multi-ethnic and multi-cultural identity, with a number of mechanisms for the promotion of minority rights; there are more than 26 ethnic groups in the province, which has six official languages. Several international organizations including the European Parliament and Human Rights Watch have expressed concern about rising levels of ethnic tension and related violent incidents in Vojvodina. Of particular concern is a frequently lax response on the part

of the police. The Serbian government has insisted that the inter-ethnic incidents were not ethnically motivated and that the police and judiciary have responded to them adequately. In Vojvodina there are environments in which young Hungarians only visit certain discos and cafes, while the young Serbs go to the other. Vojvodina attracted particular attention because of incidents between May 17 and 23 March 2004, when a wave of ethnic violence transferred from Kosovo to Vojvodina after the intervention of the OSCE and Council of Europe on November 2nd 2005. The government of the former State Union of Serbia and Montenegro formed a special commission for the suppression of ethnic incidents in Vojvodina. The work of the police first, then prosecutors, and finally courts has improved and the number of ethnic incidents in Vojvodina has decreased significantly. However, in January and February 2010 there were four separate incidents when young Hungarians were beaten because they spoke Hungarian in public. The provincial authorities responded more actively than usual, but the fact remains that the use of Hungarian language in public is a risk to the person who speaks it in some municipalities.

MILAN VRAČAR

*Kulturanova*, Novi Sad, December 2013



# **Bridging Differences: Intercultural And Interdisciplinary Dialogue**

## **DÉNES VARGA**

There are different ways of approaching and addressing an issue. As our experiences and interests form us, we also project ourselves onto everything we encounter. As social (political and cultural) beings, a given social phenomenon can speak to the multiple dimensions of our identity. We can view the same thing from various perspectives: scientific or artistic, a child's or a parent's, male or female, eastern or western etc. Of course all these and other categories don't exclude each other, but can be mixed up in an individual, in varying degrees. So, when there is a social-political issue – in our case interethnic relations and multiculturalism – we can approach it from our various starting points.

The Archaeological Bodies project targeted the position of the Hungarian minorities in the province of Vojvodina in relation to the Serbian majority. It was looking especially at the effect of the way these groups interact, has on youngsters in this region. The name of the project implies that it was looking at the physicality of living in a conflict area or situation and how the lived situation manifests in the body and physical strategies while navigating the public space; the body as an archaeological site. This was projected onto the relationship between Serbs and Hungarians. The relations between these two groups have a long history with many incidents that still influence the situation of today.

To bring the topic of the project closer, and to have a bit of a basic understanding, a short introduction is advisable about the history and demographics of Vojvodina, with an emphasis on Serbs and Hungarians, as well as on Temerin, as a specific community – concerning interethnic relations. Also, it was here the second part of the project took place.

Vojvodina is an autonomous province in the northern part of Serbia. Its biggest city and administrative center is Novi Sad. Vojvodina became a part of Serbia after the end of the First World War (before that, it was a part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, and within it of Hungary). According to the 2011. census, its total population is 1.931.809, out of which 1.289.635 (66,77%) are Serbs, and 251.136 (13%) are Hungarians.

Throughout history it belonged to various empires (Roman, Ottoman, Habsburg) and states (Hungary, Serbia), and was under their governance. Many nations left a trail on its territory, which all contributed to its multiethnic and multiconfessional character – nowadays there are more than 25 ethnic groups, and six official languages are in use. Because of this it can serve as an example of peaceful coexistence, rich cultural exchange, tolerance, multi- and interculturalism, but also as a place of conflicts, turmoil, voluntary-, program-, and forced migrations – especially during turbulent times.

Temerin is a town near Novi Sad, which in the last decade and a half gained a bit of notoriety, because of periods of frequent clashes between the Serb majority and Hungarian minority. Concerning its history, there are many similarities with that of Vojvodina in general. Its inhabitants were mostly colonists, who were moved around according to the plans of the ruling elites. This often had an ethnic dimension, and rapid shifts in the ethnic structure occurred periodically. These trends were most prominent during and after wartimes, especially the two World Wars, and more recently the Yugoslav Wars. The following table shows the demographic changes in those and recent periods<sup>1</sup>

In ethnically heterogeneous environments there is always a degree of ethnic distance and also various forms and levels of interethnic competition, which can escalate to ethnic conflicts of varying intensity and duration. Ethnic conflicts can be conditioned by many structural factors, which can be economical, political, cultural, historical, but most often the combination of all these. When we talk about the conflicts in Temerin, these factors should also be taken into account, because ethnically motivated violence is rarely a spontaneous mass reaction.

A rapid increase in ethnically motivated violence in Vojvodina, which garnered a wider attention, can be placed in the period between 2003 and 2004.

Year	Population	Serbs (%)	Hungarians (%)	Germans (%)
1921	9.927	0,7	87,1	11,5
1931	11.290	12,7	77,2	9,2
1941	11.035	0,3	91,2	8,1
1948	11.438	16,6	82,9	...
1991	16.971	35,4	55,9	0,1
2002	19.216	50,3	42,6	0,1
2011	19.613	55,8	37,3	0,0

\* (The post-1941. data takes into account only the town of Temerin. The municipality of Temerin (which includes Bački Jarak and Sirig) has the following composition, according to the 2011. census: out of 28.287 people, 67,56% are Serbs and 26,37% are Hungarians.)

These included various types of incidents: hate speech, graffiti, nationalist posters, desecration and the destruction of church property, monuments and cemeteries, destruction of private property, verbal and physical assault and threats, destruction of multilingual signs, desecration of national symbols etc.<sup>2</sup> Sudden surges in ethnic violence were usually tied to times of troubles – for example the spilling of violence from Kosovo to Vojvodina, then another wave of violence when it declared its independence, but also periods before elections – when the atmosphere tends to be electrified. However, conflicts in Temerin weren't exclusive to those periods, which show that problems run deeper.

In Temerin physical assaults and hate speech were the most prominent kind of attacks. Most of them occurred during the weekends. The ethnic motivation was not always easy to prove, and often times they were treated as drunken brawls between teenagers (especially by the police and prosecution). Besides dismissal, there was also a tendency of viewing every conflict between people of different nationalities as ethnically motivated. This had an effect of heightened sensitivity to inter-group conflicts, but tended to ignore intra-group conflicts.

In majority of the cases the perpetrators were of Serbian, while the victims of Hungarian nationality. In this period one exception was when five Hungarian youngsters severely assaulted one Serbian young man. The victim dismissed the ethnic motivation, but in the press this case garnered a wide attention, and the attackers got harsh punishments.

While the Hungarian public was quite sensitive and well aware of the situation and the attacks, and was constantly monitoring them, Belgrade and the Serbian public (even in Temerin) wasn't really bothered by them.<sup>3</sup> Temerin came

into the center of their attention only in the few cases when the attackers were of Hungarian nationality and the victims of Serbian. Besides the one in 2004, there was a series of attacks by young Hungarian skinheads in the autumn of 2011 that was well publicized, and led to further tensions (and repercussions) between the two groups, and produced quite a bit of media panic.

What could be the reasons, what is in the background of these conflicts, why is Temerin special? Usually the sudden change in the ethnic composition is pointed out as an important factor. During the nineties, there was an influx of Serb refugees to Temerin, mostly from the war-torn areas of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia. It is estimated that around 9.000 arrived, out of which 6.000 remained. The widespread opinion is that this was due to the plan of the Milošević government to divert the refugees to Kosovo and Vojvodina, and thus alter the ethnic structure of these provinces. That may be so, but in Temerin there were also already well-developed migration networks (many had relatives and friends among the earlier colonists, which helped settling in), and also the vicinity of Novi Sad played a role.

Some of these refugees were traumatized and radicalized through their experiences in their home-regions, and members of this “war generation” were very hostile, assuming the Hungarian communities here were as anti-Serbian as the Croats/Bosniaks/Albanians there. This made them intolerant, uncompromising and suspicious. These ideas have tangible results on the streets: primarily that the younger generations inter-mix less across their daily life, from classrooms to night-clubs.

In the most problematic periods far-right organizations were also on the rise, like the Serbian Obraz (Face/Honor) and the Hungarian Hatvannégy Vármegye Ifjúsági Mozgalom (Sixty-Four Counties Youth Movement). These targeted mostly the youth, and there was an increase in their numbers and activities for a time. They don't seem to be active anymore in this region.

What may be the most important, underlying factor is that this change in the ethnic structure has upset the power structure and relations, the ethnic hierarchy. There was no more need to adapt, or consider the interests of the Hungarians (and it was also supported by state nationalism). The change was fast. While few thousands arrived, the minority was (and is) still present. This created a friction. The power struggle led to a disproportionality in leading, administrative and security positions, and sometimes manifested on the streets in violent clashes.

So, if we blame only nationalism, we stay on the surface. We have to look

at the deeper processes, which produce nationalism. We also have to look at whose interest is to keep the situation as it is.

Nowadays the situation is calm and stable, but far from ideal. Although conflicts have died down, a distance still remains, relations are strained. The two communities almost lead a parallel life. This is most prominent in the case of youth, who are most affected by it.

Back to the project; at the core of it were capacity building workshops in the field of movement, video and text production and interviews on the subject of intercultural societies and the meetings between different ethnic groups.

There are variations in the personal, social and professional backgrounds of the participants, but there are also shared interests and similarities among the diversity. From a glimpse into their motivational letters, we can see that these are young men and women, who are open to new ideas and experiences, and are interested in meeting other people and cultures. They also understand the importance of differences, different perspectives and world-views, as well as the significance of good communication (both verbal and nonverbal) and tolerance. Some of them have already had some experience in theater, did a bit of acting and dancing, and explored the possibilities of expression through music. Among their interests were the ways in which the body can be used for creative expression, through movement and rhythm. Others had previous involvement in youth work, volunteering, activism, or worked with people in one way or another. The means of self-development and contribution to the community were in the center of their attention.

In order to properly address an issue and present it accordingly, acquaintances have to be made first, with the participants, between themselves, and with the topic of the project. To become truly immersed, steps have to be made also beyond that – it is advisable to get to know oneself and the social space, where it is taking place. In order to do this, intensive periods of workshops and exercises took place, which ranged from being introspective to extrospective.

As the iPhone had a primary part as a medium of recording and presentation, the basics of handling it correctly were covered through the workshops.

Sometimes directly, other times indirectly, the exercises that provide self-awareness may also help in becoming more sensitive to the position of an interviewee. Through these, it could be experienced how others can perceive us, even when we are the ones providing the information. Selective attention can play a part even in small groups, in a short time, because everyone has filters, which shift

perception. Thus it can be imagined, how this applies on a larger scale and how difficult it can be to present an objective, all-inclusive image and information.

The questions of self, others, identity, perception, presentation, interpersonal and intergroup relations are central to this project. They were constantly being addressed in several ways, from a theoretical viewpoint, from a practical approach, by talking about it, but mostly a combination of all of these. These exercises were some of the ways of dealing with them, but their significance wasn't only in self-reflection – they were also a preparation for the interviews, done in a later part of the sessions. A good preparation involves not only the technicalities, but also the ability to put oneself in the shoes of another, to see the world with their eyes, from their perspective. Through these workshops not only mutual observation could be experienced, but also being on one or the other side of the camera, and also a feeling of power (or lack of it) that can come with exposure, the vulnerability, the intimacy. Does the camera give power, does the lack of it grant freedom of movement? Does it invade personal space and how does it feel for whom, and what are the reactions?

While some exercises faced mostly inward, there were also those that pointed outward. Among these were also movement exercises; practices that could heighten the senses, raise awareness, focus it to being in the moment. The movement exercises were also an interaction with space: how to form a route, how to notice a pattern, how to break it.

The combination of the various exercises had multiple effects and goals. Their purpose wasn't just to move, speak or think, but to think about movement, thoughts, questions, statements, space, interaction, their experiences. They provided introspection, an exploration of the self, a free flow of thought, emotion, movement, but they also sparked dialogues. Seeing others also made the participants reflect on themselves too, so these processes can be viewed as a constantly progressing, developing spiral that builds upon itself.

Communication and imitation were explored also through the workshops, as well as group dynamics. Through speaking and telling stories, shifting of the narrative could be observed, how with every retelling of the story it is becoming another story. If that is the case with our own stories, we can imagine how they can be modified on a bigger scale.

Although the majority of the project was comprised of movement workshops, there were also two lectures, which brought its topic closer. The first one – by Arif Kornweitz – was a theoretical approach to conflicts, that provided an overview of what kinds of violence are there, how conflicts come to being and how can they

be handled. In the second one, I spoke about the situation in Temerin, with a focus on interethnic relations and conflicts – similar to the overview given at the beginning of this article.

During the workshops, the participants discussed questions that revolved around the main themes of the lectures, shared personal experiences and put them into a conflict framework. This provided an insight into the numerous ways one can face prejudice and discrimination, from the individual to the group level.

One of the most important aspects of the project were the interviews done with the young residents of Temerin. The topic of it wasn't addressed directly by the participants, but by the interviewees. After all, they are those who live here, who are most affected by the situations present here, who can share their thoughts, feelings, experiences. These recordings made up the multimedia part of the project, and the final performance and exhibition were built around these. These interviews also provided a starting point for the discussions developed during the workshops, a basis for the texts and critical commentary made there.

Several young residents of the Municipality of Temerin were interviewed by the participants, all of them from different backgrounds. The questions revolved around the interviewees, about their views on minorities, identity and the situation in Temerin.

While these interviews showed that the youth are aware of the things going on in their surroundings and are sensitive to them, there is a lack of knowledge about certain aspects of society. This may be attributed to not being informed enough, for example about each other, or the questions of human rights. If we take into account that most of the interviewees had a university education and are generally open minded, there are improvements to be made in the field of education, media coverage, youth mobility, intercultural and peer dialogue.

As a central part of the workshops, we can point out the question(s) of identity. As the project progressed, this was discussed continuously, "renegotiated", over and over. The borders and dimensions of it were constantly questioned and challenged, incorporating into them what has been said. The movement practices were built around these, and through them they explored their relationship to themselves, to their space, to others. Gradually this shifted the emphasis from the more specific topic of Hungarian-Serb relations to the more general, but always shifting and developing, multidimensional sphere of identities. After all, even the sense of national belonging isn't a universally accepted, invariable factor. It is a point, a level located in personal, social and political coordinate systems, that changes its place, modifies its meaning and significance; it is defined by others and experienced by

us; it is situation-specific and in interaction. Concentrating only on this aspect the relations between individuals and groups can divert the attention from the whole and the background, but especially others, the otherness of others.

Not only the interviews were incorporated into the presentation, but on their basis own questions and answers were formed also. This way, the answers were put into new context, new meanings were created.

On the day of the presentation, from the myriad of questions and answers that arose during the workshops, only a fraction reached the audience, the result provided only a glimpse into the process. Nonetheless, those that attended showed interest. The feedback was positive, and hopefully the performance left an effect on them, raised questions inside their minds, and led them to further discussions.

The greatest significance of projects like these can be found in the impact made on the participants themselves. Becoming richer with new content and personal development makes it worthwhile, especially when they transfer it, and through it influence their surroundings. They not only learnt something new about others, but also about themselves. With the newfound and self-acquired knowledge about identity, group dynamics and conflicts, they continue their journeys, applying it in their everyday life, social interactions and activities.

#### Notes:

1. Most of the data and information is from Ilić V., M. Keveždi (2012). *Temerin – the present or the future of Vojvodina*. Zrenjanin: Centre for Development of Civil Society. ([www.cdcs.org.rs](http://www.cdcs.org.rs)) and Nagy I., Tátrai P (2013). A migráció hatása Temerin népességnövekedésére és etnikai szerkezetének átalakulására [The effect of migration on the population development and changing ethnic structure of Temerin]. *Tér és társadalom* XXVII (2): 134-146. ([www.tet.rkk.hu](http://www.tet.rkk.hu))

2. According to the report of the Committee for the Inter-ethnic relations of the Vojvodina Assembly, in the period of rapid increases in numbers of ethnic incidents (2003-2004) there were 178 interethnic incidents recorded. Out of those, 82 incidents were aimed against Hungarians, 19 against Croats, 15 against Serbs, 14 against Albanians. The victims were also Roma (12), Jews (7), Slovaks (6), Ruthenians (3) and Ashkali (2). According to Hungarian political parties, between 2004. and 2005. there were 600 incidents in Vojvodina aimed at minorities. There are also the "dark numbers", the unregistered cases.

3. The government received numerous pressures from the EU Council and OSCE during 2004 and 2005. These interventions led to the formation of a special Committee for the prevention of ethnic incidents in Vojvodina on November 2nd, 2005, by the Government of the former State of Serbia and Montenegro. This was followed by a more efficient police, prosecution, and finally the courts, which, after a few years, gave way to a significant decrease in the number of ethnic incidents in Temerin as well as in Vojvodina. For the most part, the government of the Vojvodina Province is aware of the delicate environment and the inter-ethnic tensions. The local and civil actors, in coordination with the government of the Vojvodina Province, are trying to work on overcoming the ethnic distance among the youth.

## Project leaders & lecturers

**SYBRIG DOKTER** works as a choreographer and performer in and around the field of contemporary dance, visual arts and contemporary theatre. She has her base in the physical, choreographed body but her works manifest in a variety of materials. Her performance work and teaching has taken her to the Baltic countries, Ukraine, Moldova, Serbia, France, Bulgaria, Russia, Scandinavia, Germany, Austria and Great Britain.

With Benno Voorham she founded *Lava-Dansproduktion* in 1997.

Selected works and projects: *I believe(something is happening)*, shown at *Festival:Display*. 4 Video works, *Circulation I – IV*, Lviv (collaboration with Ingrid Cogne, Sergiy Petlyuk and Vlod Kaufman). *Manuskriptet Dodo:MOU*, solo, initiated by *Koreografiska Konsitutet*. *White on White*, dance film with 10 performers presented at Supermarket Artfair 2010. Performer in *For Your Eyes Only* by Peter Stamer. Performer in *Trafo*, a short film by Paul Horn, Vienna. Participation in *Tandem Ukr/Mol* as a cultural manager, initiated by *ECF* and *MitOst*.

sybrigdokter.com

**NADJA VOORHAM** is an artist born in the Netherlands and raised in Sweden. She graduated from the Audiovisual department of the Gerrit Rietveld

Academy in 2012 and is currently doing a master in Performance at the Royal College of Art, London. Her work spans over different mediums such as text, photography and performance. At the base of her practice lies an interest in the premises for human interaction and the rituals constituting it. By means of re-enactment and stepping outside the habitual she emphasizes the daily distance in between people and catalyses an intimacy within it.

Nadja has exhibited in countries such as the Netherlands, Portugal, Iceland, Sweden and England.

nadjavoorham.com

**MILAN VRAČAR** studied management in culture and media. He graduated on the theme of international theatre festivals. He is an independent cultural producer and president of Association *Kulturanova*. He was involved in many international projects and is also collaborating on many events in Novi Sad and in Serbia (International festival of Street Musicians IFUS, Festival Days of Brazil – Novi Sad Samba Carnival, EXIT festival, Sterijino pozorje, INFANT, etc.) He has also produced and coordinated innovative art initiatives and was participated in international conferences, workshops, summer schools (t.ex. Amsterdam Maastricht Summer University) and residencies (Felix Meritis residency in Mains d'Ouvres, Paris, France in 2004 and CEC Artslink residency in New York, Seattle, Portland and San Francisco in 2009). He held several lectures about his work at different Universities in Serbia and in Europe. He collaborated with many institutions such as Austrian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Council of Europe. He was working as a marketing manager in Cultural Centre of Novi Sad and was coordinating a candidacy of Novi Sad for European Cultural Capital.

kulturanova.org

**IVANA JERKOV** is by education an analyst of environmental protection, but in everyday life a youth worker and an activist. Coordinator of the Youth office of municipality of Temerin, from October 2008. till April 2015.

She is dealing with Youth policy in the past seven years and creates and implements programs that are mainly about human rights, activism and vulnerable groups. She has participated in the process of creating various policies on national and local level as well as creating standards for youth institutions. She enjoys writing a blog about Istanbul, traveling and reading comics.



**DÉNES VARGA** holds a bachelor in sociology from the University of Novi Sad (Serbia), Faculty of Philosophy, Department of Sociology, in 2014. His main areas of interest are nationalism, right wing extremism, human rights, interethnic relations and youth subcultures. Besides the academic activities, in recent years he was involved, as a volunteer and associate, in the work of the Youth Office at the Municipality of Temerin. He participated in various projects, conferences and camps, and collaborated with a number of individuals and organizations.

**ARIF KORNWEITZ** is a political scientist and is working at the intersection of conflict and contemporary art. He has conducted research about surveillance practices of NGOs and is associated with the Amsterdam-based office for cultural innovation Non-fiction. Arif holds an MSc in Conflict Resolution & Governance.

## Participants

**IVANA VUJIĆ – 22** – Student at University of Novi Sad, Department of literature.

**MARK LELIK – 16** – Student at Svetozar Marković High School, in Novi Sad.

**OTILIA KOZLIK – 15** – Student at Svetozar Marković High School, in Novi Sad.

**LEA JEVTIĆ – 21** – Finished Grammar school in Sombor, studying at Faculty of Arts Pristina, department of acting. Lives in Sombor.

**MILOŠ JEVTIĆ – 25** – Finished Technical high school, graduate of University of Pedagogy in Sombor. At the moment he is Primary school teacher, Novi Sad.

**EDINA MIŠKEI – 27** – Student of English Language and Literature, journalist, Novi Sad.

**DOLORES ALEKSIĆ – 15** – Student at High School, Novi Sad.

**OLGA SIMIĆ – 25** – Graduated from the International University of Novi Pazar – Faculty of Arts – Acting, Freelance actress, Novi Sad.

**DRAGICA MAČKIĆ – 26** – MA Student, Faculty Arts Pedagogy, University of Novi Sad.

**MILOSLAV DANIEL – 32** – Youth worker, activist, Kysač.

**BILJANA MIČIĆ – 32** – Holds a BA in Philosophy, youth worker, Novi Sad.

**EMINA STOJŠIĆ – 23** – Graduate of HMDK, Frankfurt. Dancer, teacher and choreographer, Zenica (Bosnia and Herzegovina).

**ALEKSANDRA MALINOVIC – 23** – BA in Financial Operations and Accounting. Works at KZM, Temerin.

**LUKA JOVANOVIĆ – 19** – Finished Grammar school in Novi Sad, studying at Faculty of Dramatic arts, Department Theater Directing, Belgrade.

**KRISTINA IVŠIĆ – 31** – Holds a MA in Education management, works at the International Relations Office at the Faculty of Philosophy, University of Novi Sad.

**SLAĐANA ZELIĆ – 25** – MA Psychology student, Novi Sad.

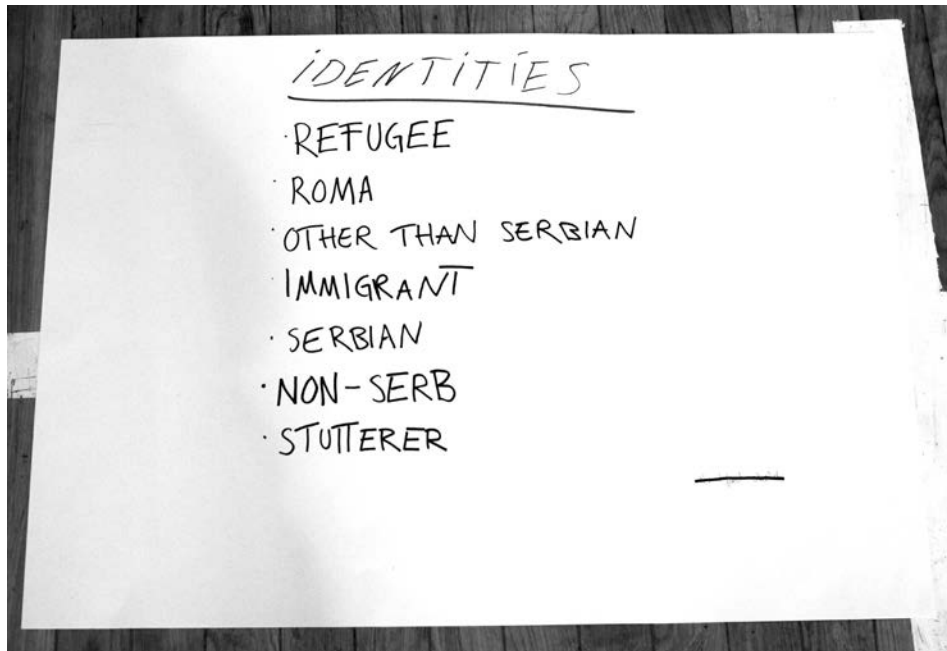
**LAZAR BARAĆ – 20** – Musician, singer, folkloric dancing, acting, script writing, directing, Novi Sad.

**IVANA BANOVIĆ – 22** – Student, folkloric dancing, Novi Sad.

**NATALIJA MARIĆ – 28** – Economic High School Novi Sad, Youth worker, English language tutor, Temerin.

**DÉNES VARGA – 29** – BA in Sociology, Volunteer at KZM, Temerin.



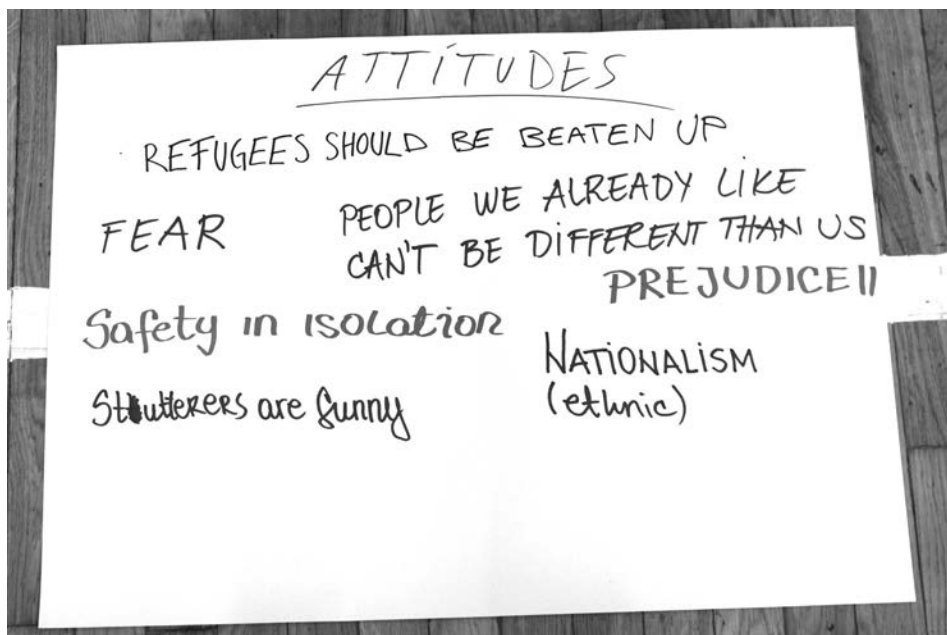


## Linking Conflict Theory And Experiences

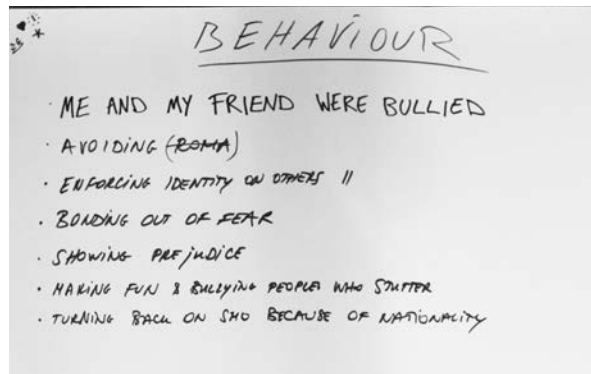
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On the first two days of the workshop, two sessions were dedicated to introducing basic theoretical concepts related to conflict in order to provide a tangible backdrop to the practical sessions and to demystify the occurrence of conflicts. These concepts were consequently illustrated by cases, simulations and by asking participants to come up with examples from personal experience. Below is a summary of the content of both sessions and a reflection on another moment of the workshop. The first session contained an overview of basic concepts of the field of conflict resolution. A definition of conflict as 'the pursuit of incompatible goals by different actors' was followed by Galtung's models of conflict (consisting of contradiction, attitude & behaviour) and violence (direct, structural and cultural). Possible conflict approaches were laid out and afterwards illustrated through the prisoner's dilemma, an example from game theory which illustrates the role of history and reputation in conflict.

The dilemma essentially revolves around the choice between selfish behaviour and socially desirable altruism. Participants were asked to play in pairs and report their choice to the group. Afterwards tangible examples for the dilemma were given, such



as trade and climate change. Also, different conflict approaches (yield, withdraw, contend, compromise, problem solving) were revisited and linked to the exercise. Next, participants played an iterated version of the prisoner's dilemma in groups of four. While the previous version of the game contained one moment where players had to make their choice, the iterated version of the game consisted of 10 rounds. This introduced history and reputation to the game, making retaliation a possible choice. The participants were asked to describe the process within their group and how they made individual choices. A number of strategies were discussed, including tit-for-tat (the winning strategy in an algorithmic simulation carried out in a scientific research). Tit-for-tat wins by starting out nice. It retaliates when it is attacked, it is forgiving and it is non-envious. (It can however be beaten by more complex strategies, f.e. one that cheats until it is caught.) When discussing participants' individual choices, it was concluded that stable strategies had emerged, even in such a short game. Players had built up reputations and other participants derived expectations from them. Thus it became clear that conflict dynamics are linked to history and reputation (Galtung's attitude) and behaviour.



At the beginning of the second session, the concepts that had been introduced the previous day were linked to examples taken from the local context. Earlier that day Dénes Varga had discussed the local situation with regard to ethnic tensions, specifically surrounding the Hungarian minority and had provided an historical overview and pointed out a number of recent incidents. These examples were used to point out that inter-ethnic relations may be influenced by (latent) violence as a result of negative attitude towards the other. Afterwards, the differences between positions, interests were addressed and illustrated by interpersonal examples as well as agreements such as the Camp David

settlement. A link to systematically violent conflicts was made through discussing the difference between symmetric and asymmetric conflicts. Consequently, the dynamics leading up to systematic mass murder were addressed. It was described how economic decline may lead to insecurity and collective loss of reference points and how the collective trauma that follows this loss may be hijacked by opinion leaders that take charge of the situation through discourse and actions. The possibility of violence following from these scenarios was described on the basis of the Rwandan genocide. In order to exemplify the type of discourse often used in violence-inciting discourses set out through propaganda and mass media, three central themes (identity, purity & security) were introduced. The narrative that connects these themes is intended to communicate that a common identity is threatened and needs to be protected from those that are a danger to its purity. As a conclusion, a reflection through the lens of preventive efforts was set out, linking Archaeological Bodies to deep prevention efforts that aim to address cultural and community relations, aim to build capacity to recognize conflict mechanisms and the construction of identity by oneself and others.

Finally, participants were asked to come up with examples from their own experience, structured according to three categories: identity, attitude & behaviour. Because of time limitations, this part of the session was carried out the next day. The results were collected on posters, which offered a view of the multitude of issues at hand and functioned as point of reference during other sessions.

### Starting out nice: a look at the interviews

The participants interviewed young inhabitants of Temerin about issues related to inter-group tensions that were dealt with in the sessions about conflict theory. A specific moment during these interviews deserves our attention because it reflects the human disposition to believe that evil is not about to knock on our door. When the participants interviewed young inhabitants of Temerin they asked them to “describe a situation in which [they] would decide to leave home and leave everything behind”. The kind of situation the interviewers had in mind was one shaped by a degree of violence. To their surprise, the answers the interviewees gave revolved around gaining independence from their parents in the form of education, employment, or love. Some even couldn't imagine a situation that would make them abandon everything. As one interviewee put it: “there is nothing negative that could happen to make me leave my parents, my family, brother and cousins”.

Participants and organizers of the workshop have expressed their surprise and dissatisfaction about these answers. In a region with a recent and long-running history of conflict, other answers were expected. One interviewer tried to rephrase and specify the question, without success. This was foretold during the preparation phase: when the leaders of the workshop were briefing the participants on the upcoming interviews, they too had to explicitly state the intent of this question. This had also been the case at another edition of the workshop that took place in Lviv, Ukraine.

But how much of a misunderstanding really took place here? Another story emerges if we read the answers as a metaphor for the human tendency to refuse to think the unthinkable.

The unthinkable, in this case being forced to leave home and family behind, of course can be imagined and verbalized – but we don't easily do so. Not due to an egoistic stance, but to an optimistic one. In fact, it would not only have been terrifying to hear the young interviewees readily describe hypothetical violent situations leading them to abandon everything. What is more important is that those accounts would have reflected a deeply-rooted distrust in the society they live in. Their optimistic stance is not naive, but cooperative. It is based on the assumption that trust is more likely to lead to mutual gain than distrust. Just like an initially trust-based approach is effective in solving an iterated version of the prisoner's dilemma mentioned above. We can read their approach as a sign of the belief that starting out nice is worth the risk.

Yet, taking experience into consideration is necessary to improve decision-making. If the other party in the prisoner's dilemma is hostile, it is necessary to retaliate. Therefore, the possibility of violence is real. The interviewees are aware of that. They describe incidents related to ethnic tensions and they speculate about the reasons for hostile behaviour such as the small size of the community, language barriers or low levels of education. It is secondary that these reasons appear to be perceived causes for tensions that are actually related to structural causes. What is important is that they tell us that the interviewees are not at all blind to their surroundings. This is essential to prevention efforts such as Archaeological Bodies. Ignoring the possibility of violence facilitates ignorance of the mechanisms that can extinguish it. Thinking the unthinkable is the first step to keep it from becoming reality.

## Interviews

Interviews were held on the subject of the situation of today in Temerin, relating to identity and minorities with the aim to form an archive of ideas and opinions. They were an important segment of the project and a large part of the workshops was directed towards ways of asking questions. In itself they were also a dialogue between participants and interviewees. The interviews that were done by the participants of the project were either filmed with simple handheld equipment like mobile phones or audio recorded. The interviews were a starting point for discussion during the workshops and part of the texts were used for the final installation/performance as critical commentary on the issues we are addressing. We are very grateful for the people who were willing to engage themselves in this process of reflection through speaking with the participants.

Some of the people interviewed were not comfortable with exposing their identity and therefore we chose to keep all contributions anonymous.

## D - 1985 - TEMERIN

Bachelor of Sociology, Volunteer at the Office for Youth and the NGO *Society of Nature Enthusiasts Falco*.

Q: Do you think that nationality influences character building or do you think it's not crucial?

A: It doesn't have to be crucial. It is to some. Some people define themselves completely as members of a certain nation or it could be even broken down into smaller groups, but they basically reduce their personality to belonging to someone or something. In any case, everything affects us, but it depends on us to what extent we allow it or how we experience that belonging, not only in relation to us as members of that certain collective, but also to others who see us as members of that certain collective. It definitely influenced me being a member of that and that nation or that and that subculture. Everything influences us.

Q: What is belonging for you? Or how does it feel? How would you describe it? Belonging and maybe, in the same time, the opposite of belonging, not belonging?

A: Well, sharing some same or similar characteristics. For me that's a worldview, that's important, and a system of values. So, I feel I belong to a group that's made of people with whom I share some same values, similar values and a similar worldview. And, of course, I'm not a part of those who are the opposite, that is to say who clash with that or even deny not only those values, but deny the world itself. For example, some who deny the right to exist to other groups because of differences, because they're simply not the same as them or because they don't want the same world as them.

Q: How would you explain people's need to be different than others?

A: Well, simply, people see themselves not only as members of certain groups, but also as individuals more or less. And if a person wants to mark their place in the world, they often do that in relation to others, especially when who they are comes less from themselves, from their own personality, and they define themselves more in relation to other, the way others see them. The need to be different can come out of disagreeing with others, actions of others, and then they simply want nothing to do with it. It's also connected with the positive affirmation of self, to simply know that they're valuable per se and the way they are.

Q: Did you ever encounter problems with belonging to Temerin and this area you live in, with belonging to this space, place?

A: Yes, I've encountered different problems because of belonging to different groups, whether it was a matter of personal choice or the circumstances. Since on

the one hand I'm a member of a national minority, and then there are members of the majority who don't like that, for example, and who have expressed that discontent either towards me or towards others and I've heard about it. Then there is belonging to a certain subculture. When I expressed more that I am a metal head for example, when I was a metal head. Then they made me out to be an occultist and junky and all kinds of things they connected to that. I think that the most common problem is lack of understanding. No matter what you belong to or what you do, the main problem is the lack of understanding when people don't understand what you do, how you do it, how you look, think and so on. A lot of people don't want to understand that, and instead they reject it. And then it's best to try to bring it closer to them somehow, to try to explain and then they don't have to like it, but I believe they can accept or something like 'OK, that's that'.

Q: And could you compare those two different approaches to not understanding you as an individual, as a member of national minority and as someone who belongs to a group that listens certain kind of music? Could you draw a parallel between those two kinds of not belonging and belonging at the same time?

A: Yes, I can try. Belonging to an ethnic group, national minority in this case, it is not exactly a matter of choice. Someone can step out of it if they want, though others might not accept it, but you're born in it and that's what you are. And especially growing up in that given cultural surroundings: It is simply a given. And it's not just a question of whether I define myself like that or not, but more whether others define me like that. And no matter how much it means to me, it's simple something given, to belong to a certain group in which you're born in. And to others it's something basic that defines me and based on how they judge me and based on how they characterize me and lay certain boundaries. And the other thing, music or youth subculture for example, is more a matter of choice where a person decides for themselves to join it. OK, there might be some peer influence there, some pressure or something. And the reaction to all that; they're both a part of personality. I'm one and the other, and the third and the fourth, and all kinds of things. And then, I don't know how I'll confront the challenge of not being accepted. It depends what is a part of the personality and to what extent. But they're both... well, not understanding and simply not accepting the personality and then, if you want them to accept different parts of your personality... Now, I don't believe there are different ways. Actually, yes, there are different ways.

Q: Did you have certain unpleasant experiences as a member of both a national minority and a minority as someone who listens a certain style of music?

A: Well, yes, I did. I mean, I had those common run-ins with prejudices and judgement based on those prejudices. Some of them I tried to explain, and others

simply... we don't have to be friends.

Q: How much do people listen when you try to make things clear and explain that they are the ones who don't accept?

A: Well, it depends on their attitude. Of course, if someone is really close-minded and especially if they're aggressive or violent; I wouldn't approach everyone the same way. It depends on their attitude. But even if someone's aggressive, but is able to calm down and then find the patience to listen, then there's a chance to explain what is what. There were some positive examples, there were some negative ones when there's simply no chance, but OK, it's their own choice.

Q: Do you think a certain kind of not understanding will always be present? That a particular lack of understanding will always remain or will people change and try to understand that we're all different? What do you think about that?

A: Well, I think it's a matter of percentage. There will always be people who will simply be closed to everything that's different and who will refuse to accept. But the problem comes when most parts of the society functions that way and when the models that surround us are like that, from family to the system of education, to peer groups, we are facing lack of understanding and acceptance everywhere. When that's wide spread, like it is here, then that's a problem and we should work on greater acceptance.

Q: Do you personally work on that in your surroundings?

A: I try to contribute, if nothing else, at least in my immediate surroundings. We all influence each other. Even if I give a good example, even to a close friend, that's something. It's best when we all contribute, no matter how much. And in general, with other kinds of engagement, whether it's volunteering or through different kinds of gigs, well there's probably a contribution.

Q: But, how would you explain the situation from your own perspective? Do you think people are ready to accept? Could you also give a bit of historical context to your views on the whole situation?

A: Yes, I believe there is readiness. When people run into positive examples it usually influences them. Not everyone might be ready to join in, but if they hear or see something it usually influences them. Of course, if they go back to surroundings that are unreasonable and not accepting, that might influence them back and that's why some kind of consistency is important. To make it more than one example, unless it's a really 'wow' example. There is hope in any case.

Q: And have you experienced changes being made?

A: Yes, yes, of course. Both in my immediate surroundings and I heard a lot of stuff. There were some radical changes too, but also a lot of little ones, exactly that – people trying to understand and then they also accepted. Yes, I've encountered

really a lot of positive examples.

Q: And what would be your conclusion regarding this issue? Is it possible to develop that feeling of belonging here regardless of whether you belong to the minority or to the majority?

A: Yes, yes. It is, of course. It's possible to develop it. It's possible also to accept it, and to tolerate it. It's only a matter of communication.



## S - 1995 - NOVI BEČEJ

Finished high school for landscape architecture in Novi Sad and started studying Scene architecture, technique and design at the Faculty of Technical Sciences.

Q: So, you currently live in Novi Sad.

A: Yes.

Q: And how long have you lived in Novi Bečej?

A: I was born in Novi Bečej, I finished elementary school there, I went to high school in Novi Sad and I've been living there since then.

Q: So both Novi Sad and Novi Bečej, apart from being Novi, are somewhat multicultural and multinational communities, towns. What's it like to live in such an environment?

A: Well, I think that in Novi Bečej, although it's smaller, people are much more reasonable and I think they accept different people and people of other nationalities more easily. In Novi Sad, ok, as they say Novi Sad is a big village, but people are somehow far more limited. I expected much more from Novi Sad, that people will be in a better mood for some other things, for some different, well, I don't know... I don't even know how to describe it.

Q: And what makes you think that they're more closed towards that multiculturalism than in Bečej?

A: Well, I went to high school there and again I think everybody more or less knows each other in Novi Bečej and then there's no big barrier, whether you're Roma or Hungarian or a Serb, it doesn't matter. There are some kind of barriers that somehow define you, there are prejudices about people, it's like I'm less educated or know less if I came from a village or a smaller community. That's the impression I got during high school.

Q: Do you think that national minorities are generally... what's the status of national minorities in Vojvodina?

A: Well, the story is that they're endangered. But I don't know, Roma people are getting more and more rights. Honestly, I like Roma culture very much. I have few Roma friends and they came here to study, I mean it's not a problem, but then again you have that part of Roma people who still act like their rights are threatened, like they didn't get some rights, and I believe they have. Then again there are those who will judge you based on the color of your skin, your looks, your nationality, it will always be like that no matter what rights they get, what rights we have.

Q: In what kind of behavior we can see that there's that kind of judgment?

A: I think they can cause that too. I have one friend who is Roma, but I believe they didn't judge him that much because he somehow managed to fit in with the crew. He came and finished medical high school, got enrolled at the Medical University. He's basically a good person and I don't think there is that difference then. Yet again, if a member of national minority or anyone starts that kind of a discussion, they started it themselves, they let someone judge them as a national minority.

Q: And where does identity come from?

A: I think it basically comes from family. Parents basically form you in their own way, they slowly form your personality, and later when you get to a certain age you start finding yourself, creating your own personality. And that's it. I think the greatest influence comes from upbringing.

Q: Could you make some correlation between the things we inherit and the things we build ourselves when it comes to forming person's identity?

A: The things you inherit from your parents have a great influence, but again it depends on the personality whether you'll let your parents form you completely or you'll say at some point: I want to be my own person now and to form myself my own way. I think it's crucial that we form our own personality, that that's more important. Though the upbringing and the family conditions are very important too. If you have a strong personality you can get out if something's not right.

Q: Where do prejudices come from?

A: Also from family. I think everything comes from family, depending on what your parents are like, whether they let you... whether they fill your head with prejudices from the start or, I mean, it's normal that each of us has some prejudices. That's very normal. It's just a matter of how you'll deal with it and whether you'll let them consume you completely.

Q: Could prejudices be broken somehow?

A: Well, they can be. I also have prejudices when I see someone. It's not OK to have prejudices based on someone's appearance, but that person will often surprise you. And when you get to know someone, you should always give people a chance.

Q: How can we affect the deconstruction of other people's prejudices?

A: I don't know to what extent we can, but mostly through conversation maybe. Let them get to know you.

Q: Do you have any neighbors of other nationalities?

A: I do. We all do in Novi Bečej.

Q: What is your relationship like?

A: In the beginning, while we were all little, since Novi Bečej is a small town, we were all hanging out. Now it all depends. I had a lot of Hungarian friends. I still do.



I have no prejudices towards them. It just depends on where life takes you. I don't hang out with them anymore. I do with some. We were all hanging out and playing together when we were kids.

Q: Are there situations and conflicts that we put into a national context even though they originate from something completely different?

A: I didn't really understand.

Q: I was inspired by what you said about not losing touch because of your backgrounds but because of where life took you and your interests, so now I'm interested in what other situations people lose touch or get into conflicts that are natural, and then people put them into a national context?

A: I don't even think about it that way. When I lose touch with someone it has nothing to do with nationality. It has to do with interests, maybe. For example, my best friend left. We didn't have any common interests, we were friends since childhood. We're like brother and sister. He went far away because of his career. There's nothing I can do about that. Nor will I hate him for it, nor will I be jealous or something like that. I won't let it fall apart. I'll see him when I see him.

Q: How do you react to media reports on minorities in Vojvodina?

A: Basically whatever the media releases might not be true, it can have a counter effect like someone's taking pity on minorities, and in reality it has a counter effect. They might even provoke the same minority they're trying to give rights to, because they're not really doing it right...

Q: And what would be the right way to do something?

A: To give rights to minorities or for the media?

Q: Both. Whatever inspires you more.

A: Maybe they should make more of these workshops, to develop tolerance. There is no need for media when it comes to minorities because I have no interest in reading about it. I do my best to be tolerant. I won't let anyone step all over me or something like that, but I'll be tolerant and I'll give everyone a chance. Why not. We're basically all different, regardless of anything.

Q: You said that it's different in Novi Sad, where you live, than in Novi Bečej, and that you believe people are less open to minorities, that you feel like a minority there sometimes too.

A: Yes.

Q: How should people from Novi Sad behave in order for that feeling to change?

A: They should stop perceiving themselves as hosts, just because they're from Novi Sad. Maybe they should be a bit more tolerant towards other people who come here, and I believe they didn't show themselves in the best light. They're like they conquered it and it's theirs now. Like they're stubborn. I didn't make many friends

in Novi Sad. Mostly when I meet someone and keep hanging out with them it turns out that they're from someplace else. They're full of prejudices, but what I just said is also prejudices. Not everyone's like that.

Q: I guess it's hard to be politically correct.

A: Yes.

Q: And to everyone. Are there maybe some kind of events or activities that can be open to everyone? That we're not already doing? Is there something in Vojvodina, in your town, in your surroundings, that's more accessible to one group and less accessible to another?

A: There always is. It can be accessible to whomever, but the difference is always being made. I always move in tighter circles because I prefer a more intimate atmosphere. There is no barrier, people chose where they want to go, what they want to do. There's always more available clubs, some kind of manifestations and what not for the majority in towns, like we have the Dormition of the Mother of God in Novi Bečej, it's the patron saint celebration of Novi Bečej accessible to the majority, not just to me. I don't like it, so I won't go, but there is a minority.

Q: And what makes something accessible to everyone? What makes that Dormition of the Mother of God or any other cultural event accessible to everyone?

A: For everyone to hang out together, to be in the same place, regardless of music... There's no rule who can attend, and who can't, we choose for ourselves where we'll be and what we'll do and with whom.

Q: Where can we hear the experiences of minorities?

A: Basically everywhere. You mean like some kind of a public space or whatever? Well, you can hear it everywhere if you run into a minority. I can hear a friend who's been counted with the minority, although he doesn't feel like that. I believe he doesn't feel that way because we all accepted him and that's not an issue. You can hear it in the street, in conversations, you can hear the experiences of minorities anywhere, if you find yourself somewhere by accident.

Q: And how can we confirm how people feel?

A: Well, we can't really.

Q: We can't confirm. We can only believe what somebody said. How many national minorities are there in Vojvodina?

A: Only in Vojvodina?

Q: Or in your town. How many minorities in your surroundings are you aware of? Give me a number or the amount.

A: I don't know if Hungarians are considered a minority or not. I mean, I don't count them as a minority because there are almost half of them I think. The Albanians, that's three already. I don't know, people are coming from China, so they might be a

minority. They call them the minorities, but I don't see them as a minority because we basically let them come, why not? They can come.

Q: What is a minority then?

A: Well, it's a term and a fact that they are a minority, it's just that a lot of people see it as an insult, like minorities should either be eliminated or given more and more rights. Why wouldn't we all have the same rights? I mean, no one should have more if we all live in the same town and we all live in the same country, we all have the same rights, why not?! There's a lot of talk about minorities, and it always comes up that minorities don't have enough rights, and the minorities this, and the minorities that. As far as I'm concerned, I would give them all rights. I'll accept them as well.

Q: And what are the rights we all have?

A: I guess we all have the same rights to socialize, to go out, to live well, to go to school, although when we talk about school, there are again differences in terms of minorities that they have an advantage because an image has been created about them.

Q: What kind of advantages?

A: Well, the advantage of getting a dormitory room, of getting enrolled at the university first. I know that about Roma people. But the ones that want to enroll should be given the advantage as far as I'm concerned, if they can't afford it. They should get the dorm and... Yet again, our educational system is one big mafia...

Q: And is there something about this subject you feel inspired to say and that I haven't asked you?

A: I think there should be more workshops like this, and not just in Temerin, anywhere. There's probably some in Novi Sad that I haven't heard of. They should promote it a bit, so people would hear about it and really be willing and ready to take part in something like that. I think that's one of the ways to resolve everything.

## E - 1985 - TEMERIN

Professor of Hungarian language, works at the Office for Youth – KZM Temerin.

Q: What do you think are the most common prejudices people have about someone they don't know? What do people base their prejudices on? Are they based on physical appearance or... What do you think they're based on?

A: Yes, that comes first. Physical appearance comes first. Whether someone is dirty, whether they look strange, whether they have some health issues, whether they talk differently, talk funny or, I don't know, behave aggressively somehow.

Q: Did you ever feel people have prejudices about you, people who don't know you?

A: Well, yes I have.

Q: Why, what do you think?

A: For example, in a bus to Novi Sad... Well, should I tell this?

Q: Yes, yes, feel free to speak.

A: Well, I was speaking Hungarian with my friend on a bus and some woman was sitting next to us. And, it was years ago, she was yelling at us – why are we talking in a foreign language, are we talking about her, and if we're not going to talk in Serbian so that she can understand, to shut up. That, for example.

Q: How did you feel at that moment?

A: Well, awful. And then, after that day, when I enter a bus, I'm always checking if I'm bothering someone while I'm talking to someone or should I shut up...

Q: And have you experienced such things only in Novi Sad or here in Temerin too?

A: I haven't here in Temerin, but there are those who did. I haven't found myself in such a situation.

Q: What do you think of that woman? What was her reason for attacking you?

A: Maybe she really thought we were talking about her. Maybe she just doesn't like national minorities. Or maybe she was angry that day because of something.

Q: Yes, and then she took it out on you.

A: Maybe.

Q: Did you manage to communicate with people before, while you didn't speak Serbian? How did you communicate with people around you?

A: Well, you know, I didn't go to the store where I couldn't explain what I wanted. And when I became a little bit older, I've asked my mother how to say this and that, and in time I learned Serbian. I'm still not great at it and it's difficult for me to express myself well enough, but I always try and I respect people who try, in my language, to...

Q: Learn?

A: ...explain or learn it, I think that's important, to try and not to make fun of someone who...

Q: Doesn't know?

A: ...can't pronounce something nicely right away.

Q: And while you didn't speak Serbian, did you ever feel strange somehow or you felt completely like, how can I put it... You didn't feel the need to understand what people are saying? Did you ever think that someone might be talking about you at the time when you didn't understand Serbian? When someone was talking in Serbian, and you didn't understand?

A: Well, yes. Yes. Yes, to be honest. I always thought about what they might be thinking. When someone was laughing...

Q: Do you think that knowing languages is important in general for people to communicate or...?

A: Yes. Yes. It's very important. I understand now more and more how important it is. Every language.

Q: And what motivated you to learn Serbian language? When did you start learning?

A: I really wanted to learn it, but it was very hard for me because the private lessons are not very good and they cost money, but it's very important because – you see, even now I have difficulties. When I started going to the University, I realized you need the language everywhere and then I started reading books in Serbian, and it's a bit easier with books...

Q: Do you feel accepted by the community in Temerin?

A: Yes, I do. I don't feel like anyone doesn't accept me. But I don't go places where I would feel they don't accept me.

Q: OK. And tell me how do you like life in Temerin? Do you think there is a difference between Temerin, as a smaller town, and some big city, metropolis, like Belgrade?

A: Well, I haven't lived in a metropolis yet, but... Now I don't know a word. When someone whispers behind someone else's back and talks.

Q: Gossips?

A: Gossips. There's another word. I'm sure there is?

Q: Well, spreads rumours.

A: Spreads rumours, yes. I think that in smaller towns, like Temerin, people spread more rumours about each other and like to spread ugly stuff, unpleasant stuff, bad news. And I think that in bigger cities people don't know each other that much and that's why they don't spread bad news so much.

Q: How do you feel when you find yourself in the company of people who spread rumours about someone or spread bad news?

A: Well, it depends who we're talking about. Sometimes I take part in it too. But I always end up feeling bad because it might not be true.

Q: And do you think that people have prejudices about nationalities, that there are certain features that are assigned to a certain nation, whether it's Serbs, Hungarian, or whoever, English people?

A: Well, they have. Yes, they have prejudices. For example, Hungarians... We have a prejudices that... I don't know if that's a prejudices or it's true, that Serbian children compared to Hungarian children are... And professors who teach both classes say so. ...that Serbian children are louder, they're more spirited, how can I put it...

Q: Temperamental.

A: Yes, temperamental. In a bus, for example, or wherever when they're together, that Serbs yell more than Hungarians. And they are more open.

Q: Open?

A: Yes. Hungarians are a bit withdrawn. Maybe because they're a minority and of course they're used to there being less of us here. But I don't know if that's true.

Q: Do you think that it's better in general to be in a minority or always in a majority, no matter what the majority is like?

A: Well, I don't know if it's better to be in a minority.

Q: I'm not talking about national minority, but in general. Like, when you have an opinion, do you always stand behind your position, even though you're in the minority, or you think it's always best to be in a majority, because you feel more secure when more people support you, even though you maybe know the majority is wrong?

A: Well, if I know they're wrong, then of course it's not good to go with the majority just because of that. I don't know if that's what you meant.

Q: Yes that's what I meant. Whatever opinion you might have, if you know most people... That happened to all of us. ...if you know most people think differently, do you defend your position or you're kind of withdrawn, and you think it's better to be in the majority? Since some people are always afraid to express their position so they wouldn't be lonely.

## L - 1992 - TEMERIN

## Student of mechatronics, volunteer at the Office for Youth.

Q: Tell me, do we belong to a certain group simply by being born?

A: Well, I don't know how to define that. It depends in what way.

Q: Do you think that nationality already creates some kind of identity?

A: Well, I don't know. Maybe it shouldn't, although it does in many people. It seems to me it does in most people.

Q: You had encounters with that?

A: Well, I think that everyone has encounters on a daily basis with people who feel strong national affiliation, who support, for instance, only their own group – Serbs only Serbs. Hungarians on the other side, all those nationalities. But I think that's completely wrong.

Q: Yes. But do you think it's created by birth or by something else?

A: Well, that depends more on what they teach him at home.

Q: On what they teach them at home?

A: Yes. You behave the way your parents teach you. Actually, your environment also should influence you. For instance, I was lucky to live in an environment where I was surrounded with Serbs, Hungarians and others. And we always got along just fine, so some kind of tolerance developed and the feeling of community, which is completely normal and natural. No divisions of any kind between us. People are either good or bad.

Q: And do you also see intolerance on a daily basis?

A: There is a lot of it. A lot. At every step.

Q: Will you tell me something about it?

A: Well, I don't know. Just now we can see this religious intolerance, then towards the LGBT population. Right now this thing about Pride is in focus, which is not tolerated by the Serbian Orthodox Church and other extremists at all. Mostly right wing. Those are just a few examples. My mind blanked.

Q: If, now for instance we mentioned LGBT or national... if you, for example, never found yourself in a situation to be insulted on the basis of your sexual orientation or nationality, do you then think you shouldn't help people who are facing such problems?

A: In situations like that we should help everyone. I simply believe that there is not enough empathy in people, to be able to feel compassion with those people who are facing that kind of abuse, because that is psychological abuse. So, I would help, of course. I've found myself in a situation once where my friend was being bullied for

being Hungarian, and I took his side and then nothing happened, they accepted him.

Q: That's how it should be.

A: Yes. I grew up with him; we were basically inseparable since we were four.

Q: You grew up here in Temerin?

A: Yes, yes.

Q: Was it always like this or...?

A: Well, in the beginning I didn't notice that. However, lately there have been, as media calls it, some national tensions. Although, I think that's not it. As I've heard, those are basically more some right wing organisations on our side and on their side, so those conflicts are mostly between them, but they suck some people into it who are neutral. So they can create a problem for those people too. That's based on the information I have, I'm not sure. I'm not very interested in that because I think those people are completely irrelevant and there are not enough of them to cause greater harm to the community of people who are tolerant amongst themselves and who support each other and create the community in general.

Q: Did you have more contact with tolerance or intolerance?

A: Well, basically, in this part of our country tolerance is more present than, I don't know, someplace else. In these multi-ethnic communities, people are used to each other and their differences, and they simply respect each other.

Q: Do you think multi-ethnic society is a good thing?

A: Yes.

Q: What can we gain from it?

A: It's completely OK because it teaches us that sense of community and that all people should stick together, without fighting each other, to live in harmony, to be OK with each other. Neighbourly. If necessary just 'Hello neighbour', if nothing else.

Q: And you mentioned media. In your opinion, how big is the role of the media in those conflicts?

A: Basically, in this information society the role of the media is huge. The things they release, and they release all kinds of things, directly influence the minds of the people who consume it. For example, you have Blic and Kurir. They publish all kinds of nonsense, to put it like that, and people read and accept everything with no critical attitude, without even thinking about it, without researching, they just accept it as it comes. So, media definitely has an impact on the consciousness of some people. Although, it might be even most people.

Q: And, in your opinion, how important is the role of school in forming the right way of thinking?

A: Well, it all begins with preschool. That's where it starts and then later, as they grow up the personalities are formed in that community, class, where people meet,

socialize, study together. And, of course, that's where a personality is formed.

Q: And how much does school actually help in accepting differences? How much does it teach us tolerance?

A: Well, I'm really not sure about that. We used to have a school here in Temerin which had both Hungarian and Serbian classes together, all in one school, and tolerance was much more present then in comparison with today when they've split the school into Hungarian and Serbian. The children don't know each other at all nowadays and then some kind of intolerance... some tensions develop between them because they don't know, like 'Hey, he's Hungarian, he's no good', 'Hey, he's a Serb, and he won't speak Serbian'. Complete nonsense.

Q: You mentioned traveling. Do you think it helps a lot if people travel and truly see that there are other cultures, different people?

A: Of course. It opens new horizons and...

Q: Did it help you?

A: Yes, of course. I saw some new people, met them, destroyed some of the stereotypes they had. It's definitely beneficial.

Q: Tell me, how do you stand with going out here in Temerin?

A: It depends. For me, as someone who is more oriented towards rock 'n' roll and harder sound, there are not a lot of places to go. There is maybe one rock café where I can go once in a while, but... I would change that if I could. It is mostly limited to people who listen to this mainstream music and turbo folk or whatnot, so we are pushed in the back a bit. But it's changing. I can see progress recently. Rock culture is awaking and I'm glad to hear that, to see that.

Q: When you were talking about what makes you happy, you said you're into training. What do you train?

A: I'm into karate.

Q: For safety?

A: No, no. Simply... I started by chance actually. When I was nine, my neighbour was training and he was like 'Come to check it out, come to check it out'. And I said OK. And so I went and I liked it very much when I saw it. At the next training I already started training and since then it developed into a sort of love. I don't want to stop training as long as I can train. My sensei says that all karate masters die young, in their 90's.

Q: And have you ever used on someone what you've learned there?

A: Unfortunately, I had once an opportunity in the centre of Temerin, but it wasn't between Hungarians and Serbs, but between ours. Anyway, there was a fight; some friends started it and most people scattered. There was just three of us left against eight of them, but we turned out OK and won since these friends were into aikido

as I was in karate, and we pulled out something fast and ran. That was the only time that I had such a direct contact. And, thank God, I had no other chance. I don't approve of violence and I don't like violence, although I'm into martial art. If I find myself in bad situation, a conflict, I always try to fix it with words, by calming down.

## M - 1995 - TEMERIN

Student of mathematics, first year, volunteer at the Office for Youth.

Q: Tell me, what is tolerance?

A: So, for me tolerance is when people accept people as they are. Like if you won't talk to me if I don't speak Serbian.

Q: Did you ever find yourself in such a situation?

A: Yes.

Q: Yes? Could you tell me something about it or...?

A: A few years ago I was on a field trip with an association for persons with disabilities. There was this one girl there that wouldn't talk to me. I didn't speak Serbian that well at the time.

Q: And how did that make you feel?

A: I felt bad, because even then I could somehow explain what I wanted to say, but she just said she didn't understand anything.

Q: And what kind of opinion did you form about her then?

A: I realised that she's not really... That she's not... I forgot the word.

Q: Nice?

A: Just because I couldn't speak Serbian that well, she didn't want to communicate.

Q: So, how tolerant do you think people are?

A: That's a difficult question.

Q: Yes it is.

A: There are tolerant people. I think that those who went to high school are more tolerant than the ones who didn't because they have an education.

Q: You think that education is important?

A: Yes, definitely.

Q: Tell me, concerning tolerance, since there are people of both Hungarian and Serbian nationality in Temerin, what's the situation like down here?

A: The situation is such that we have people who wish there was only one nationality here and there is one group of people who wish that Vojvodina becomes a part of Hungary again. We were taught that, I don't know if it's true, that Vojvodina used to be a part of Hungary once upon a time; part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire actually.

Q: Do you think that our nationality has an impact on our identity, on who we are? Does it define us?

A: I don't know.

Q: Do you think that a Hungarian person has certain characteristics just because he's of Hungarian nationality?

A: I think it only defines your mother tongue.

Q: Do you think there are people who think that nationality actually defines us? Have you ever come across such people? No?

A: No.

Q: That's nice. I know of some incidents here, right? Some fights. Do you know something about it?

A: Unfortunately, I do.

Q: Would you tell me something about it?

A: I won't name names or something like that, but I know a boy. He was at a coffee shop. I have to say that he was Hungarian. When he wanted to go home, he went off with his friend. They went together a couple of times, and some boys came at the coffee shop once and told everyone that he and his friend communicate in Hungarian. Those boys came to them and told them some ugly words and they've hit them hard just because they were speaking Hungarian.

Q: How does it make you feel to hear such a story?

A: First I feel...

Q: It makes you angry?

A: It makes me angry. I think that those boys who hit them are not tolerant at all and that they don't accept people who are different from them.



## N - 1990 - TEMERIN

Finished Grammar school in Bečej and now finishing studies in Geography and Biology at the University of Novi Sad. Works in an elementary school, assisting children with disabilities in learning processes. Born in Pristina.

Q: I know that there are half Hungarians, half Serbs here in Temerin, how do they get along? How do they function? Do they cooperate?

A: Well, they cooperate, but how intercultural we truly are, that's arguable. In some activities, some associations do better than the others. For example, some structures are more developed, others less. The youth truly cooperates lately, but I see a lot of gaps in education, in schools, in institutions. Since we have 30% of Hungarians, we are a bilingual community and all the programs we do should be done bilingually. But, we don't have capacities for it and then a barrier is created. If I teach in Serbian, then the children who listen to their classes in elementary school in Hungarian won't understand everything well, so we try to get some young people to get involved who speak well both Hungarian and Serbian, so they would take part in those activities with us, and so they could clarify when something is not clear. We had a couple of projects dealing with this issue. Actually, we had a lot of projects dealing with this issue. And every time we do something, we try to include the Kokai Imre school. They have an educational program in the Hungarian language. And we have the Petak Kočić school, that has their educational program in Serbian. Now, since we're a big municipality, we have two settlements Bački Jarak and Sirig. There we have the schools Danilo Zelenović and Slavko Rodić. We have a high-school Lukijan Mušicki, which is bilingual, there are classes in both Serbian and Hungarian, and we really try to connect the youngsters. I believe that people started changing now that the Youth Office has started these activities with some associations. We also have coffee shops and places to go to, and an ethno house Tajhaz, we have Brvnara, and all of it is kind of split. Young people of Serbian nationality go out to some coffee shops where young people of Hungarian nationality won't go to because they don't have friends there and their kind of music is not played there.... So, there are some other obstacles. I've lived here for 22 years, which is how old I am, and I don't speak Hungarian. And if I spoke Hungarian I might be able to communicate better with that part of my community, and if they spoke Serbian better, they could also communicate better with us. But, the system allows that if you're of Hungarian nationality, actually if you speak Hungarian

language and that's your mother tongue, you have the possibility to function great, with no obstacles, to speak Hungarian in the store, at the Health Center, to speak your mother tongue in all such places. You have no need to learn Serbian until you reach University. Then the problems start. Young people either go to Hungary or stay in some of the institutions where they can work in their own language.

Q: Don't you think people who live in a foreign country should learn the language of the country they live in?

A: Well, they should, but...

Q: I mean, for understanding other people.

A: Yes, definitely. Well, people try, but you know what the biggest problem is? Here, for an example, at the elementary school... at least while I was a student, we had English language, we had German language. You learn some basics of that language, but if you don't speak it, of course you can't communicate well. And now if the kids of Hungarian nationality at the Kokai Mire school learn only Hungarian language and have no friends of Serbian nationality or that speak Serbian, they don't use that language and they simply don't know it. And when they find themselves in a situation where they should speak Serbian, then they slowly improve, because they actually know it, they know some rules, they know a lot of words, but they haven't reached the stage to talk to someone.

Q: And do you think they might be embarrassed to start talking because they don't speak Serbian well?

A: Well, in the beginning they are shy in our programs when we connect them, they are shy. Later they open up, the whole communication improves. I see that later they add each other on Facebook, they talk, go out together. That means our programs have good results. Now, I can't present to the community how important that is, but I think it's extremely important that such activities take place, to bring young people of different nationalities together, because this is the only moment when they communicate. In all the other systems, the system will keep them apart. 'Come on, you of Hungarian nationality speak Hungarian over there, and we will speak Serbian over here, and Bačka will be peaceful'. Well, how peaceful is Bačka?

Q: And what do you think what is the best way for a nation to express its identity, without hurting another nation with which they coexist in a community?

A: By not letting your national identity influence things. We organize activities here, it might get emphasized, but they both need to be emphasized, and that always turns out bad. That's why I think if we look at any person, either of Serbian or Hungarian nationality, and what's woven into their identity, there is the ring of nationality too. And when you reveal that nationality a bit, you realize that culture and tradition and language are a part of it. All kinds of things are located in that

ring of nationality and that's a very sensitive area which shouldn't be touched. And then, if we would organize an activity in which we would say 'Come on, Serbs and Hungarians, two flags', and now we're doing something, that always ends up badly. But if we forget those flags, if we forget those nationalities, and we say 'Come on, we are all young, that's what we have in common. We are all people. We all have similar needs for cultural events, for some activities', then that connects us well and the results are good.

Q: Do you think it's like that because of the environment, because of Serbia, that you can't express your culture because you're in someone else's country? Or does it work the same way everywhere in the world?

A: No, you can express your culture, that's not the problem. I believe no one is complaining about that. Hungarians have their own holidays too, they celebrate them regularly, and all such events go on with no problem. But if we want to connect both nationalities... Now will you celebrate a Hungarian holiday? Well, if my community is celebrating, I will join in, I have no problem with that. The question is how someone else will react if they visit such an activity where they only speak Hungarian and where the Hungarian flag is flying. Then they will ask themselves 'Wait, is this Serbia?' and there'll always be someone who will have bad, negative attitude towards that. And then if you say 'Hey, this is an activity that connects both nations'... For example, it happened that Hungarian associations organized some events and they invited the general community, and you would come, but the program is announced over the microphone only in Hungarian. I really don't understand Hungarian, and it's not that I'm not supportive of it and that I don't want to, but I simply don't speak that language. And maybe that's my fault, but I wouldn't blame myself. I would blame the system which didn't teach me to let this environment make me one language richer. So, today, 22 years old, I would know two languages, I would be richer for an additional value. Now, for me that's fortune. What is that for other people, that's the question.

Q: Did you ever find yourself in a situation that someone of Hungarian nationality felt uncomfortable speaking Hungarian with someone who is also Hungarian, passing by somewhere, and that someone gave them a mean look?

A: You have right wing organizations that promote that limited view. Just one language, one culture, Serbia, three fingers. I mean, that's not our story, nor will it ever be. That system of values can't find its way into institutions because that would be awful for the whole community. There are people who think that way. It can't be avoided. You have such things everywhere, not only in Serbia, but in the surrounding area too. We should fight against such things. Well, I don't know how to comment a situation like that. It happened, but you overcome it.

Q: And what does the term 'nation' mean for you? What does it mean when someone says he belongs to a certain nation?

A: To be honest, I don't have that feeling of nation here. Maybe I have a greater sense of community than of nation. I have some friends, for example, who visited Latvia and Latvians are proud Latvians because their culture and tradition are not limiting. They, for example, celebrate life, celebrate nature. And their national songs are dedicated to that sort of growth in the community. Here the songs and our culture in general are such that we make ourselves to be Heavenly people. And I don't see myself in that, you know. I am freer; I am more for forming that sense of community than the national one. I mean, if we're going to talk about the feeling that should be formed here.

Q: You think that things should be created which everyone can glorify?

A: Yes. For a community such as ours, yes.

## A - 1997 - TEMERIN

High school student at Grammar school in Bečej.  
Planning to study sociology at the Faculty of Philosophy in Novi Sad in 2015.

Q: You were born here? Could you tell me how you've spent your childhood here?

A: Well, yes. Mostly round the building I lived in. I had friends who gathered there as a matter of circumstances. We were hanging out with them. I very much cared about friendships in my childhood, it was very important to me to fit in regardless of how they might react to my presence. It happened, of course, I remember some good times and those not so good. I think I had little influence over it, I believe my childhood influenced my general understanding of society later on. I learned some things, how much it's actually... how much it's not necessary to impose yourself into where you don't... where you simply see, you feel that you don't belong. Maybe that's because I'm not very social in general, but I'm very communicative and that's my good side.

Q: Since you mentioned that people shouldn't impose themselves where they feel they don't belong, if that was a part of those bad aspects of your childhood, could you tell me something about it, describe one of those situations?

A: Well, I actually overcame that kind of situations, they didn't really cause me some emotional pain as they have to my parents, but I didn't pay attention to it then. I only cared about socializing and I have socialized and made the best of my childhood. I can say I've spent all of my childhood playing, even when I started going to school, I neglected the first few years of elementary school, until I grew up a bit and realized why I should focus on school, why education is important. There were some situations, but it appears to me I created a defense mechanism which I still use to fight against it and I think I'm successful in it, regardless of what people say or do, I believe I have a solid defense mechanism. Probably because of it or because of my nature, I don't know.

Q: Could you tell me, since you often mention that you're not very social although you're communicative, you defined yourself as not social, do you think that it provides you with some kind of security or that it might keep you safe from people you shouldn't be in contact with?

A: Yes, more the latter. Actually, I try to avoid socializing with people who don't suit me based on first impression, although that might not always be good, but I simply don't force it and maybe I follow the line of least resistance. However, knowing some people who so much... actually most people who care so much about fitting in, I don't know if it's really the line of least resistance. It might be a more passive

way, but on the other hand I believe it's much easier to let the water carry you than go against the current. I think it's easier, regardless of passivity.

Q: In your opinion, how should any kind of conflict in a society be overcome? It could be a social, economic, could be a political conflict. What's the best way to do it in your opinion? Could you give me an example?

A: Well, yes. Reach a... try to establish a good relationship through communication and make some kind of a balance of interests, some kind of compromise maybe, if that's possible and they agree. But if they realize it doesn't work, that energies don't match, that interests don't match, that nothing matched, I don't see why they should insist on anything.

Q: Could you tell me what is identity in your opinion? What is actually the identity of some person?

A: The identity of a person is actually something you gain in time. The base of it is, of course, given to us at birth. But the problem occurs when we start being a part of society. We're all different, that's a fact. But it seems to me, and I find it sad, that many of us are trying to discard our own personality just to fit in with the masses, in their way of thinking and their behavior. Starting with most banal things, like the taste in music... Actually, that's not the most banal thing, not at all. I made a mistake. The way they dress, that's not it either, but starting with most banal things to everything else. It's all connected, I can't exclude anything. Little things are also what makes us who we are.

Q: How did you build your identity?

A: Through freedom. Freedom of thinking, freedom of movement, of behaving. I think that's it. But I was aware I have to learn. I'm not talking about formal education. I mean it of course in every sense of the word and for as long as I live. I learned that and I'll try to stick with it for the rest of my life, I'll try not to lose this life force.

Q: You mention people who fit in better, who belong to a majority so they would have better chances. What kind of security do you think they find in that? That's one of the questions. And the other one is how could we maybe help them build their own identity?

A: Ah, those are serious questions. Do they find security in it? Seemingly. They think they do. But actually it's just the easier road, it appears to me, and they're not really getting anything from it unless they're Alfas in that group of mediocrities. I think they're more likely to become a victim of that group than anyone who's outside of it, who has their own defense mechanism and their own opinions and their own personality, of course not too limited because that leads to nothing. I believe that at some point they would even have it worse than the ones who're on the outside. If they don't stick out.

## A - 1995 - BAČKI JARAK

Student at the University of Applied Sciences, environmental engineering. Volunteering at the work camp *Citizens Beyond Walls*, held in Temerin with a focus on how to fight right wing extremist organizations.

Q: What do you think about the position of young people in Temerin?

A: What do I think about the position of young people? Well, it could be better. It can always be better, right? They should be more engaged. I mean in terms of bars and all that, it's all cool, but there's not much of gathering without alcohol, to have fun in more silly ways, to spray each other. I don't know. More to gather like... connect.

Q: And what could, in your opinion, if I understood you well, motivate them? What should, in your opinion...?

A: Doing something together. Traveling together. Exchange, for example, with other countries. Getting to know different cultures. To learn, for example, origami or to make a pot.

Q: Yes, that's a nice experience. I had an opportunity to do that once.

A: It doesn't have to be an exchange with another country, it can be within Serbia between different towns, to meet different people. Young people have to get to know each other.

Q: And are there people of different nationalities or other nationalities in your neighborhood?

A: Well, I'm half Russian actually.

Q: Well, OK.

A: So, I mean, I have no problem with that. I know so many people from around the world. I even have a friend in Sweden. I have no problem with different nationalities, that's not an issue... Well, there aren't, since I live in Bački Jarak, there's less Hungarians and... I don't know if there are many. And I live in the very center, so more Serbs.

Q: Do you think the law of youth is being respected?

A: Do young people respect the law or do people respect the law of youth?

Q: Whether the law of the youth is respected, specifically? I mean, do they have enough information to make decisions about future? Basically, I'm interested in... I asked the question whether the law of the youth is being respected because I wanted to ask the question, but to unpack it like a WinRAR. So, first thing I'd like to know is how much you, as a young person, know about your rights.

A: We were taught everything in school at the civic education, but I think those are more general rights. I don't know if I have a right to ask, to go there, to enter or other little things like that that I'm not sure of. I probably do have the right, but they're hiding some things, there are things we can do that we don't even know about. It could be better. Not everything is given on a platter, we have to find our way on our own, to get into organizations, not everything is accessible.

Q: Do you like the fact that you have to dig for every little thing?

A: No and yes. No because it would be easier if I got everything on a platter and then I can simply choose what I want. And yes because then it's mine somehow, I found it and I fought for it and it had a greater value then.

Q: And do you manage to find something interesting and how do you share it with people you know?

A: Yes, well, Facebook. I think I don't ever use the regular text messages anymore in those situations.

Q: Yes, I've noticed that Facebook is getting old already, that some other applications are getting into the spot light.

A: Well, yes, Facebook is already kind of...

Q: Booooooring!

A: Yes. But when I find something interesting, I share it.

Q: So, you're share information gladly?

A: Well, yes. I like the fact that you can find things easily. Things from other countries too. That was a real problem before. Now I can just type in anything, really anything.

A: It is cool, but it somehow makes us lazy a bit.

Q: Well, in what respect did you get lazy?

A: No, I don't know, like if I can't find something on the internet then it doesn't exist. There is much information that is not available on the internet.

Q: They're not available accidentally or on purpose?

A: Well, yes, I don't know whether it's accidental or on purpose, but internet is a very powerful thing. I mean, you can find so many things there. Important information and real information. Especially about what's going on in the world. Since I know Russian, the things that are happening in the Ukraine now, so I could follow American TV and Russian TV and Ukrainian and Serbian. That's the way it goes. I mean, someone might think it should be the same, but it's completely different. I don't know, these were... Actually, Russians are saying that they're just protecting their border. Ukrainians are saying the Russians attacked. No, that the Americans are there. Ukrainians think it's Russians. All of it is just a manipulation really.



## B -1985 - TEMERIN

Graduate of Faculty of Philosophy - MA Psychology. Volunteered at the Youth Office of the municipality of Temerin as a peer educator. Worked in Social Care Center of municipality of Temerin as marriage consultant. Grew up in Beli Manastir (Croatia), moved to Novi Sad in 2005 and then moved to Temerin.

Q: Could you tell me if you have a job? Are you trying to find a job? Do you study? What do you do?

A: Well, I'm unemployed. I'm a psychologist by vocation. I had a job till November, but I don't have one since November. I'm now looking for another job. I've applied for a few and now I'm waiting to see if it pans out.

Q: Could you tell me if you grew up in Temerin?

A: No, I haven't. I'm from Croatia. I grew up there. I've moved to Temerin in 2006.

Q: Considering that you're now getting closer to your thirties compared to the generations that are now, I don't know, 14, 18 years old, who are just approaching adulthood, do you think they find it interesting here?

A: Well, I believe so, but I don't know how much the younger generations are now used to... whether their expectations are too great, but I think that Temerin offers enough for its size and number of residents, enough activities, I mean content. How can I put it, there are coffee shops you can go out to, there are some cultural events. Not a lot, but some. If you're really interested, you can attend. So it all depends on the people and what they need. I mean, someone always complains, nothing's ever good enough, and when something's happening, they don't go. So, I think they have an opportunity to socialize nicely, to have fun here and to learn something. Of course not as much as Novi Sad, but Novi Sad is huge, I mean much bigger than Temerin, but I think there's enough here too, that it's OK in that respect.

Q: Yes. The situation is different. And if, for example, people who live in Temerin had greater desires, cultural, sports, any kind, could that provincialism of Temerin compared to Novi Sad be overcome? Could that be organized? What's the organization of local events here like anyway?

A: Well, they don't happen very often as far as I know. OK, maybe that's a marketing problem. I usually hear about some events only through other people. I don't see posters anywhere. But, I don't know, there are some exhibitions at the Center for Culture and Information, there are some presentations at the theater hall. So, there are some things. Of course, there aren't many, but people organize things

in different ways, but I think that marketing was always a problem, how to reach people. While I was at the Youth Office, I volunteered there, I mean I'm still a volunteer, we had that problem – how to attract people. We had a lot of activities at the Office and in the center, everywhere, but whether it reached people or not, or they just heard about it, it just passed by their heads and they forget, I don't know. But I think people are trying, the ones who're doing something, they're trying to make something. Now, whether someone will come to see that or not...

Q: Tell me, while you worked at the Youth Office did you face any problems? Did young people really come to you with specific questions?

A: While I was active, we really had a lot of those entertaining and educational activities and all that. But in my experience it's a limited number of people who used to come there, it was always the same people, and I think it was hard for us to reach new people. So, if someone never stopped by, if they weren't interested, we weren't able to drag them there in any way. So, people who came to one event would come to the others too. So that circle of people who came to our activities was always approximately the same. We offered different possibilities for entertainment and for education, and we were helping people with gaining some skills. I mean, for example, we had educational preparation for a job interview, writing CVs, we did a lot of things like that. There were also drawing, painting and crafts workshops. As I remember there were more participants at those activities, it's obviously more attractive to them, a bit more entertaining. People came to us with questions. There was, there still is, a little library. People were coming to borrow books. They were getting informed about the universities, I think they used to come at the end of high school to ask for our help in choosing a university, courses, getting information about universities. I mean, there was a plan, whether it came true or not I don't know, for some university students to join, to talk about universities, what they do at their universities. So, it was... I know it was, people came with questions and I believe we always tried to help them and that they've found what they needed.

Q: Could you tell me how do people form prejudices in your opinion?

A: How do people form prejudices? Well, prejudices are mainly formed because people... I mean, they first receive an information, usually from someone older, if we're talking about kids they usually hear their parents' opinion, and then they don't even try to recognize the object of prejudices, another group of people, nation or something. And then if you don't know something, you don't know how it is and what they're like, so you'll mostly believe anything you hear on the side if your basic information is negative. And you'll say, I don't know, they are ugly, they are rude, they are... And every time you hear more and more of that without actually getting to know them, there's nothing to break prejudices and it's just reinforcing itself. So,

I think it comes from someone telling you something, and then you don't try to get to know something and that's how prejudices are formed, out of not knowing the object of prejudices.

Q: What do you think prejudices are based on? Are they based on not understanding or fear or some personal drive for isolation?

A: Well, I kind of believe that there is some kind of fear in all of that. Whether it's conscious or latent, I don't know, but I think that in many people there's always some kind of fear of diversity and some people try to overcome it, to get to know new things, new cultures, new people, and some people don't have that kind of consciousness and don't want to overcome it, instead they just feed that fear and they defend themselves by building fences that separate them from the objects of their fear and then they build prejudices and...

Q: Have you witnessed some situations of aggressive, problematic nature in Temerin? They didn't have to involve you. You could've been just an observer. Or something you maybe just heard of. Or it didn't reach you at all?

A: Well, I was in such situations where I grew up. So, not in Temerin, but it doesn't matter. But yes, I've witnessed it in Temerin... I mean, I didn't witness it as a participant, but as an observer, but it happened a couple of times when I went out with friends here to some coffee shops. A couple of times some boys fought, started a fistfight, but I'm not really sure what was the cause... I think it's usually under the influence of alcohol, and then they find a reason to fight. But that's the only occasion when I saw some aggression first hand.

Q: Could you tell me if you personally had any such experience?

A: Well, not in Temerin. Not in Serbia. I've experienced that a lot where I came from.

Q: And... You can answer if you want, of course. How did you feel in that situation? Was there a way to overcome it? Do you think there's a way to overcome such problems related to some kind of national identity or the lack of it in someone's head?

A: Well, the times I grew up in were very difficult in Croatia. It was a postwar period, when that model was reintegrated in Croatia and all that, and there was no will of the system to deal with it, so it wasn't dealt with. To be honest, I felt... I was scared, I was constantly scared and I was running and all that, but you couldn't always escape. Sometimes they would catch you and beat you up. I mean, it's true. Luckily I didn't have so many problems, since I was very good at running, I have to admit, but some of my friends weren't.

A: Well, yes, I was. What can I say? I'm not very brave, I never fought, I'm not like that. I was into reading and philosophy and stupid things like that. I'm kidding, not philosophy, but I wasn't into those fights and stupid things, but some of my friends

were, they were getting into fights every day. (They laugh.) Well, they were. I'm laughing now, now it's funny to us who've been through it, but those few years, so '97-8-9, 2000 were very hard for us there and I was constantly afraid. I mean, that period was harder on me than the war period that I've also spent there. So, it was very hard and I can say it's very fortunate it was overcome where I came from. How was it overcome? Well, coexistence. As I said when we talked about prejudices, we were forced to live together there and to go to the same schools and to go to the same kindergartens and to go out to the same coffee shops. In time you simply realize, I mean those who caused problem on their side and those who caused problems on our side, that we're all people, that we're all flesh and blood, and somehow it was overcome. I'm so glad there are no more problems of that nature over there, but those few years were very rough.

A: What I find interesting, since it's the topic I was addressing in my graduation paper, I'm pleasantly surprised by the developments at where I'm from since I believe there are no more such divisions between kids. Everyone's hanging out together over there, everything's OK. On the other hand, there are always a lot of divisions in Temerin which I find to be awful. There was a very good film, some guys made it, about the coexistence of Hungarians and Serbs, and someone said 'We don't live together here, but next to each other', something like that. And that's the impression I got too, which is terrible. So, basically, I think the situation here is still bad, while it's better over there, there's no such problems over there anymore, while children are still quite divided here. I don't want to get into the reasons why it is the way it is. I have a few ideas about the cause of it and I think I'm on the right track, but I don't want to talk about it.



## J - 1990 - TEMERIN

Graduated 2014 from Faculty of Philosophy - MA Psychology. Internship program at nursery school Veljko Vlahovic in Temerin as an associate psychologist. Volunteer in the NGO Parents-Temerin and recently in the Youth Office in Temerin. Born in Sarajevo, she moved to Kikinda (Serbia) when she was 2 years old and since 10 years she is living in Temerin.

Q: Do you live in Temerin?

A: I live in Temerin, yes.

Q: Were you born here?

A: Not born. We moved to Temerin about 10 years ago.

Q: And where did you come from, if I may ask?

A: Well, to Temerin from Kikinda, and to Kikinda from Sarajevo. Since I was born in Sarajevo.

Q: And tell me, considering that you moved between countries, Serbia and Bosnia and Croatia, we were at war... Considering that there are some national tensions, did you have any problems since you... maybe just because you moved around? It doesn't have to be about anything else.

A: Well, yes, I had a lot of problems in Kikinda. I mean, my family and the refugees in general during those years, because a lot of people moved to Kikinda and I believe also to Temerin. OK, I'm talking about Kikinda now. They kept calling me a refugee, a Bosnian and such names. It wasn't my fault at all, but people saw it that way, especially the kids and they were especially jealous if you succeeded in anything. And then they're surprised coz you are a refugee, bad things happened to you, and you still achieved something in life, so they ask themselves if you did it in some shady way. It was all very interesting. Here I didn't feel it that much. Now I don't know, years passed, and people seem to have forgotten or it's, I don't know, a different setting. But it was very obvious in Kikinda, that bigotry towards...

Q: Thank you for sharing this with me because I have a pretty good idea what it was like since I was born in Croatia. I moved to Sremska Mitrovica and had some similar experiences. I'm glad you're in Temerin. Since you mentioned those misunderstandings, could you tell me, since it's partially related to your profession, if you stayed in Kikinda or any current or future period of your life, do you think there is a way to overcome that sort of misunderstanding between people?

A: Well, I don't know. I haven't thought about it much. I think the situation calmed

down a bit now because a lot of time has passed. I don't think it's as strong as it was back then. So I think there might not be a need to overcome some misunderstandings.

Q: How do we form prejudices?

A: Well, I think that's connected to creating identity, because it's very difficult today to be a Serb, for example. At least that's the way I see it. Because everyone wants to be a Hungarian, everyone wants to be a Croat and everyone wants to be a Bosnian, but no one wants to be a Serb. And then poor Serbs have a desire to say 'Hey, it's great to be a Serb' and that might be the reason we form prejudices about other people. I think that's the reason. Everyone somehow has the right to be who they are, and we're somehow... it's never good to be that. But I don't see what's wrong with that. I think that's how people think, that that's the reason prejudices are formed.

Q: You think that it suits people better if they belong to some other parts, minorities, to declare themselves like that?

A: Well, I don't know, maybe because they get more attention. Fine, OK, I know they get more attention because you have to support minorities too, they're not on their own grounds, but on the other hand the ones who are on their own grounds should be able to say 'Well, OK, let's have respect for both'. What was the second question?

Q: Finding common grounds. The second question was is there maybe a way to overcome that? If you found yourself in a situation, it doesn't have to be about nationality, simply... You'll have a family tomorrow; how would you explain that to your child?

A: Well, I don't know, I always believe that you should love your own and respect the others. I mean we should be proud of who we are, of having red hair, but respect those who have, I don't know, black hair or... I mean, it's their own business, their taste, there right to be there. I mean, as long as you don't threaten other people.

Q: How would you feel, if it's even possible to answer this question, if you had no feeling of ethnicity in a multinational surrounding?

A: Well, it's possible. I felt it last summer. My grandmother and grandfather lived in Bosansko Grahovo, that's in Crni Lug. I don't know if You know where it is... In Bosnia, next to Livno. And mostly Croats and Serbs and a few Muslims live in that part of Bosnia. And my grandparents had Muslim and Croatian friends, and we're Serbs, and we were all hanging out together last summer. And, I don't know, we visited the Muslims, they made us coffee, they taught us how to make their pies, I mean their way since it's all different. Again, we made barbecue with Croats, we danced kolo with Croats. You couldn't feel it at all. I mean, I don't know, I was conscious that they were Croats, Catholics, Muslims, but there was no barrier. It wasn't an obstacle at that moment for people to hang out together and have a good time. I keep telling everyone about it. It was a very beautiful experience in my life. It was great.

## T - 1991 - TEMERIN.

Student of MA of mechatronics in Novi Sad at the Faculty of Technical Sciences. Activist and member of the NGO *Society of Nature Enthusiasts Falco*, where he was participating in local activities working with children and youth.

Q: How long have you lived in Temerin?

A: Since birth.

Q: How do you feel in Temerin?

A: Well, good. I can't say anything bad. There are some problems, but generally it's fine.

Q: And what are some of those problems?

A: The current problem is the society and the state of the society and the country, mostly economic. There's no work, people are unemployed, there's no money, and that causes problems, so people are getting angry. That's the main reason. The society is starting to differentiate, there are places to go out to for some, and not for some others and those are the problems. And as I noticed in Temerin, the great problem is the passivity of people. Whatever people organize, here or at the Center for Culture and Information, before or now, I've been following regularly for a while now, there are some openings, people who organize the exhibition come or people who open them, their relatives, up to five people. If there's no rain, then there are 20 people. That's a disaster. There's no people, there's no social activities, they disappear. And that passivity of people is starting to be expressed through religion as well. That's causing a problem.

Q: What can we do to improve communication?

A: Motivate people somehow, it's mostly difficult. The society is very closed here.

Q: Closed in what way?

A: I don't know, when they rely on public opinion, they get no feedback as far as I know. No opinions, usually there's no reply. We get nothing. There was an initiative to get a bicycle track here two years ago. OK, we were aware that something like that can't happen in a month, that it's a process that takes years, maybe it would take 5-10 years, but we got a reply: it's not in this year's plan, but we turned to them to put it in some future plan. And they completely rejected the initiative. We forgot about that. There was already something planned before, but we wanted to slowly activate it and put it into focus, to start the process of turning it into a project, considering possibilities to start something, and that takes money. Now it's

a question whether the Municipality itself should propose a project to be financed or with some association, whether here in the state or as an IPA project<sup>1</sup>, that could work too. We can't do that on our own. The Municipality has to take charge.

Q: So, a lot of support. And you mention lack of communication and feedback. I'm interested in one aspect now. Since you're Hungarian, how do you see international communication in Temerin? Do you think there are differences between...?

A: Public communication?

Q: Communication in general.

A: There are separate newspapers both in Hungarian and Serbian. The radio works half the time in Hungarian, half in Serbian. Unfortunately for the media, they release some information, but there's a lot of mistakes, and that's a problem. Both newspapers and radio. And then you need to check it out, you can't trust them, and published information are usually one-sided, not from a wider perspective. It was mentioned before, in relation to the Youth Office, that the Municipalities over there have their own TV channel. I know it existed here too and in the neighborhood on cable TV, it's relatively easy to set up, but we still don't have it. That could be done.

Q: How does that division in media communication affect the communication between people?

A: Well, it affects it a lot. In autumn we did a project of planting trees with the support of Ministry from Belgrade, I'm not sure where exactly we got the money from. We notified the media. If I'm not mistaken, only the Hungarian channel of Temerin radio showed up, and we wrote the article for the others and sent it, and they didn't release it. Or they released just a fraction on it, like a tenth of it. We documented everything we did, but I think we should focus more on the website and then we can release it there and it will be more accessible to people.

Q: Do you think that the situation with communication is caused by the language barrier or that there are other reasons?

A: We made some mistakes too, but the text was translated, so all they needed to do is release it. They didn't want to. We also made a video and edited it and everything was done. They didn't release it anywhere, they didn't want to, like we invited them too late for them to come. I know we notified some of them in time. They didn't want to, so later they said we didn't notify them.

Q: Do you miss anything in this community? I mean in Temerin.

A: Well, as far as I see, the problem in Temerin is that we don't know what we want. We do things day to day. Plans exist, don't exist. There are many civic associations and part of them work, part doesn't, they're falling apart. We have a problem that there are not enough people. We don't know how to attract more people who want to do something, because we miss work power, there is a desire to do things, but we

have no time. I don't know what to say. People being passive is the main problem, because there are people here, they sit at home, watch movies, play games, there's a bunch of young people doing nothing but sitting in front of their computers all day long. Those who go to school do that, but there are many who finished school, they're unemployed, they do nothing at home as well and they have time to do something of social benefit, but they don't want to.

Q: And does a more active society bring more conflicts?

A: Yes, in a way. But an active society can resolve those conflicts through conversation. Because there were bigger conflicts, fights and so on, it usually happened at night, when people go out. And both sides were mostly drunk by then. They had too much to drink and then they start thinking about differences and who has more. The problems start then, but that could also be resolved if they closed the bars in time, now people start going out at 11 p.m. or whenever. Ok, it changes the society, but they shouldn't allow... till 1 a.m. would be enough, they could wake up in the morning to do what they need to do and there would be fewer problems. The problems occur mostly between people who provoke them. Sometimes it happens that they're one-sided, but that's rarer.

Q: We have this situation in Temerin that schools are separate, I mean the nations have school each in their own language, but the buildings are separate. Do you think that affects the youth in Temerin and the way they bond to each other?

A: Well, it shouldn't affect them, because we go to preschool together. The fact that the schools are separate does affect communication a bit, we communicate less, but even if we were in the same building it doesn't mean we'd communicate more. The only thing we could have together is physical education, but that would also create conflicts, because you'd have teams playing against each other, and that usually goes based on nationality, Serbs play against Hungarians, if we talk about football, basketball, whatever, and I don't believe that would lead to improvement. The buildings are apart, not far from each other, there's a different schedule and timetable. So there are no conflicts caused by that. We need more information to know each other and how we behave. When it comes to religion, there are many Orthodox customs I don't understand. OK, I respect them, it's the way they do it and that's OK. I do it differently, we don't know what's what. And when it comes to the rest, the problems started when people were moved here, people who never had contact with other nations and weren't used to their existence.

Q: And what are those problems?

A: It happened after the war. There's a part of Temerin where they settled. There are talks that it was done on purpose because Temerin had over 50% of Hungarians. Now there are about 30% as far as I know.

Q: That's correct, some 20-30 years...

A: Now they've changed that on purpose. Turned things upside down.

Q: And who would've done that? Who has the power to purposely change the balance of population?

A: The government back then and I don't know who else supported it. It happened before as well, but it should be done slowly, gradually, because it happened before, after the World War II, but not of these proportions, because people who didn't know how to use a kitchen came here, so they were teaching women how to use these modern kitchens, and what the parquet is, that it's not firewood. Stories like that were going around.

Q: You mentioned there were some problems then because some people never had contact with another culture. What's the situation now?

A: I believe it calmed down since then, but this economic crisis had been going on for years. Right now everybody's trying to get out of here. Both Hungarians and Serbs. I hear about it even in the bus, people finish school here and then go abroad to find a job. They don't want to stay here. It will cause serious problems, there will be no young people left, and it's obvious even now that people are leaving, and if the whole generation leaves, so to speak, there'll be no youth left, and there are already problems with the Hungarian school, they're closing down grades. There were 4 grades with over 20 students each, while I was in school even up to 25. Right now there's only three grades with twenty students. That's a big difference in 20 years. And that's a current trend that will continue.

Q: And how does that make you feel here?

A: Well, I was planning to try and find a job here, but the associations that exist now will start to disappear. Civic and others, because there'll be no people to take part in them and do something. I don't know how many people are present and active here. There was something planned for the students, it was organized for the second time too, but there were five people the first time, as far as I know. If there's five people, that's not representative of the whole society, and if all the rest are passive, it won't work. The associations will disappear, there will be problems. OK, we live, we'll continue to live, but even we don't know how and we can't know up front.

Q: Are there any rights, your rights, for which you believe are threatened or not respected enough?

A: We have a school, education is possible, it's true there's no university in Hungarian, just a few departments, but since we live here, we have to learn the language and that's not a disaster and can be done. I don't like it either when the professor says we have to learn the language, because if they don't see who's writing then they won't... he checked who wrote it, otherwise he wouldn't have accepted the answer

which was technically correct, but not grammatically. Other than that, there are no problems at the university, I'm the only Hungarian in class, but I notice the rest too, there are more Serbs, but three or four of them speak Hungarian really well. But they don't use it. They know it, but I only discovered that when they're talking to someone on the phone, and that's a bit strange after three years.

Q: And in which language do you follow the media, I mean in most cases?

A: Mostly in Hungarian. If I see something on Facebook that they posted in Serbian, I check out the link. I don't watch news, I don't keep track of it, I check out weekly newspapers. It's mostly all familiar.

## N - 1991 - SIRIG

Student of MA pedagogy on Faculty of Philosophy in Novi Sad. Internship program November 2014 in nursery school *Veljko Vlahovic* in Temerin and as associate psychologist since beginning of 2015.

Q: What does it feel like or how would you describe life in Sirig?

A: Well, considering that there's not many national minorities in Sirig, so we're mostly Serbs, it's usually quiet, there are no conflicts so to say, it's quite peaceful. Everybody knows each other since it's a small town. I find it pleasant to live there. Everything's close – the town, Temerin, I mean Novi Sad and Temerin are close. And I kind of basically like it. I mean, it's not bad. I'm only sorry there are no different cultures, so there's nothing new for me to learn. We're all Serbs, so we know it all more or less.

Q: And what do you like the most? I've never been to Sirig. Tell me how it is. What would you recommend to me, for example, where to go or what to see?

A: Yes. Considering that it's a small town, I mean a village, the only thing I would recommend, which is a bit unusual, is this new settlement in Sirig where the refugees live. I mean, all the houses are literally the same and those are all refugees. And it's constantly being renovated and something new is constantly being made. It's at the end of the village, next to the fields and nature, so that's something I would recommend to everyone to go and see because it's kind of... it's not common for our village because it's a bit separated from it, I mean from the center, so it's kind of something I would recommend. Because I live in the center, so I don't have a chance to go there very often, to that other part, so every time I do go there's always something new happening.

Q: You mentioned there are no national minorities in Sirig... And have you ever been in contact with someone, maybe during your schooling or something...? Could you describe to us some situation or communication with some national minorities? What's your opinion?

A: Yes. Well, since I'm at the university, I mean I study pedagogy, we had many Hungarian colleagues, we were all girls there. Well, for example, my best friend from the university is Hungarian and I kind of learned a lot about their culture through her and she learned a lot about mine. And I taught her to write Cyrillic. And, for example, I find that interesting, now she always writes her courses in her student ID in Cyrillic. Because they don't really know Cyrillic, so she learned it. And she told me a lot about their customs. I find that very interesting, to learn something

new, so I was mostly hanging out with them. She's kind of one of my best friends.

Q: And what made the strongest impression of the things you've learned about Hungarian...? What was the greatest similarity, and on the other hand the greatest difference between the two cultures that you were in contact with?

A: Well, I found it... Since she has a younger brother and she keeps telling me about their custom of the First Communion or whatever the name is, and that was pretty unusual for me to see her little dress and the things they wore to church. We don't have that, for example. And it was unusual when she was telling me about some of their wedding customs. That was also unusual because we don't have that. Other than that, the places they go out to are pretty different, the music is different. She took me to the clubs in Novi Sad that they go to. I think our two cultures are very different. I mean there are similarities, but there are not many religious similarities because I think there's also a lot of differences. So, I learned many things, and that was very nice.

Q: What do you think... For example, if you thought about the future or about the past, could you tell us something about the coexistence of different cultures? So, how it might have been in the past? What do you think it was like in the past? Or maybe not so far back, but something that you remember. What's the situation now and what do you think the future will be like or how would you like it to be in the future?

A: I think, at least when our municipality is concerned, since we're a part of the Municipality of Temerin, that in the past and now in the present there's a lot of bigotry between let's say Serbs and Hungarians, since there's not a lot of Roma people around here. And somehow I feel it will only grow. And I've heard many of my friends planning to leave Temerin specifically for that reason, because they don't feel comfortable here and someone's always attacking them or they're attacking someone, and there are always some conflicts. I'm sorry about that. I would like it if we could all be together and hang out together, regardless of the nationality or stuff like that. But personally I think there'll be less and less of them here and that we'll somehow separate completely so that everyone would live their own life.

Q: And how do you find out about such incidents? Actually, I don't know what kind of incident those are. What's going on? If you could give us an example. And how do you find out that something happened?

A: Well, it's mostly fistfights here. Hungarian guys and Serbian guys. And how do I find out? Well, it's published in Temerin newspapers, I hear it through friends, when they go out there are fights, mostly some insults, humiliation. I mean, Temerin is a small town, you hear and find out everything, so I mostly hear it from my friends. I don't know, this and that guy got into a fight or something like that.

Q: Have you ever found yourself in a situation in which, let's say, you were a minority? That you're from Serbia, for example, and you went on a trip, so other people were the majority.

A: Well, yes, it happened to me when I went to Budapest, for example. It happened then that I was a minority, since we were on our high school graduation trip, but it was 10 of us, and so many of them. And it happened when I was in Italy. I was a minority there too, since Italians don't speak much of English, and I don't speak much of Italian. And it happened to me when I was in Greece. I was a minority then too, since I went to Kavos and there are a lot of English people there and we were... the five of us were a real minority. And, I don't know, it wasn't pleasant. I mean, it was mostly unpleasant because of the language because I can maybe understand English, maybe even a bit of Italian, but it was most unpleasant in Budapest because I don't understand Hungarian at all and they speak so fast and the language is so difficult and I couldn't understand a word and that was the only time it was really unpleasant. I really felt like a minority in the store, on the street, at the hotel and wherever I went I was a minority.

Q: And how did you feel? If you could describe it to me. I mean, were you confused, insecure, or what?

A: Well, I felt kind of rejected, to be honest, because... I felt like I don't belong there. So, like I fell there and now it's where I am. And I didn't feel accepted and I was insecure. I kept asking myself if they're maybe talking about me or... I mean, I couldn't understand what they were talking about, so I felt uncomfortable in their presence. And simply I felt rejected.

Q: What do you think when do feel like we don't belong, and when do we feel like we do belong?

A: Well, I feel I belong when I find myself surrounded by people like me, when we have many things to talk about and when we simply understand each other and when we add to each other's story. And I feel like I don't belong when it's the opposite, when I feel like a minority or when I can't find a common ground with someone, regardless of whether we speak the same language. Even if we speak Serbian, it doesn't matter. Simply when we don't understand each other and when I'm talking about one thing, and the other person about another, and then I simply feel like I don't belong with that person.

Q: And if we think about it in terms of national minorities and those conflicts, what do you think how does it start? Is that something individual that turns into something collective or not?

A: Well, I think that, as far as Temerin is concerned, it probably used to be individual



before, but that now it grew into something collective. I mean collective on both sides, collective on Hungarian side and collective on Serbian side. At least that's what I think. And that it's somehow turned into a bigger problem, problem of the whole municipality, not just of some individuals or some smaller groups, let's say, and that it's now kind of a big, big collective problem at least in our municipality.

Q: And what do you think is the reason for such conflicts, because you mentioned it sort of used to be the same in the past?

A: Yes.

Q: Why do you think such things happen?

A: Well, personally I think that people are not used to diversity and that people are pretty intolerant to other people. And they're not ready to get to know other people and to simply give other people a chance to show that we're all more or less the same regardless of culture. And I think if someone's different we tend to discard them automatically. I mean, we don't give them a chance to prove that they're something else. And, simply put, I personally believe that people don't think much about their own actions, but they see someone act in a certain way and they all just follow their lead. And that's basically the biggest problem, not knowing the people but just creating divisions automatically and there's no friendships nor going out together nor socializing, and then automatically there's not understanding either because that's how we're growing up. It's instilled into people from a very young age and then we simply learn to live like that and when we grow up it's very hard to change such attitudes.

Q: You were talking about your friend from the university who is from Hungary. I mean, not from Hungary. She lives here, right?

A: Yes.

Q: Were you brought up that way, since you mentioned it, or did you manage to find a way to surpass it, to realize? What was the deciding moment?

A: Well, for example, I have been brought up like that, since my aunt is married to a Hungarian, so it was normal to me to, I don't know, celebrate two Easters, two Christmases, for us to visit them, for them to visit us. And that was simply normal to me. I mean, my family was brought up that way, we grew up in such a setting that none of it is strange to me and it's very difficult for me to understand that someone can't respect that, but maybe it's because other people had no chance to be surrounded by such people, so they probably see it differently. Because, I mean, she's my friend, and even though she speaks Serbian but has a bit of a Hungarian accent, it doesn't bother me at all and I don't think it's wrong that she doesn't know the cases, gender of the nouns and such things, while other people make fun of it a lot, and I'm used to it because my uncle is Hungarian, so... I mean, I'm used to it. I

simply grew up in such a surrounding.

Q: And you said that people don't like differences. What do you think why don't they like differences? I mean, what is that thing in a person that's causing them to be repulsed by the things that are different?

A: Well, personally, since I'm a pedagogue, I believe the main, central problem is family, that is to say home upbringing is such that we're not taught as a let's say nation how to accept the differences and to accept some other people, and I don't mean just national minorities, it might be a disabled person or whatever, any person that's different, and we instantly feel repulsed by someone being different, we think there's something wrong with them. I mean, since they're different than us they're not good enough for us. And I strongly believe that it's a problem of the family and a problem of home upbringing, because we learn such things from a very young age. So if we taught the children since they're little that we're all equal, that we should respect each other, I believe there would be far less problems because the children would simply be taught to react differently and it would all simply be normal later that we're different, but we live together.

## M 1993 - TEMERIN

Studied graphic design at Technical College of Vocational Studies in Novi Sad. During high school volunteering at Youth Office of municipality of Temerin.

Q: What do you think about life in Temerin?

A: Well, I don't know. Somehow I always tried to take part in some activities, to entertain myself. Now, listening to people around me, they say nothing ever happens in Temerin, but I don't think that's true. I believe that young people have places to go out to at the moment, which is very important because young people were always bored here. And as far as the Youth Office is concerned, it offers some possibilities for the young to be active. So, life in Temerin... depends for whom, depends on how you choose to look at it. For me it's fun.

Q: How different is your home from the world around you?

A: My home, very. It's very different from my neighborhood and everything else. First of all, I'm in the neighborhood with people of mostly Hungarian nationality. We are basically the only Serbs around. There's always some music, some kind of festivity at my place. Something's always going on. Our house is always full of people, something I can't say for the rest of the street. They are somehow more reserved. My home is, at least compared to the rest of my street, somehow full of people. When some other things are concerned, for instance, we work with kids, we gather little kids from around and the neighborhood and do some creative stuff with them, so as far as my street and my quarter are concerned it's somehow very active.

Q: What do you think are the main reasons for conflicts?

A: Differences. I was just recently talking to a colleague. She was bullied at her school, since she's half Russian, half Hungarian, for being different, because she's neither pure Hungarian nor pure Russian. Simply because she's different. Or because of different opinions, for example. People are often incapable of accepting other people's opinion, and push their own instead, and if the others don't want to accept it, some kind of conflict occurs. More rarely it's about an economic situation, mostly those are conflicts about different opinions or being different. At least as far as I can see.

Q: And what do you think about the position of young people in Temerin?

A: Well, in general, I think they should be more active in a positive direction. Since Temerin is a multinational environment, different kinds of conflicts occur because of diversity. Instead of putting all that together, combining those differences into

something beautiful and creating something together. I think there are too many divisions among the young on national basis. Of course, there might be some economic factors there as well, I don't know, but I honestly think that there's too many divisions among the young because of... religion, after all, since we have here a protestant, a catholic and an orthodox church.

# Organizations

## LAVA-DANSPRODUKTION

Since 1997 *Lava-Dansproduktion* has been involved in numerous teaching and performance projects in Sweden and Eastern European countries. In many of the projects we have collaborated with dance artists, actors and physical performers. By returning regularly to many of the countries where we have been invited to bring our work to, we have built relations and collaborations with dance artists that stretch over many years.

A selection of projects we have been involved in:

- *Waiting in the Margins* a project that took place in Georgia and Ukraine.
- The project *DOM/Home* is a project in which Benno Voorham created a dance performance with a group of 6 dancers from Moldova, Ukraine and Belarus and a group of teenagers from a children's home (Moldova, Ukraine, Belarus) 2012-2013.
- Tandem project *Inside-Out* a collaboration project with Associa-

tion Dzyga from Lviv 2012. *Tandem* was organized by *ECF* and *MitOst*. *Inside-Out* resulted in 4 video works *Circulation I-IV* that have been shown in Chisinau, Kyiv, Amsterdam, Lviv and Stockholm.

- *Suitcase versus Bricks*, 2011, Sybrig Dokter directed the project in a collaboration between *Lava-Dansproduktion* and *Kulturanova* (Novi Sad).
- *Kings&Queens&Other Bosses*, a performance for children of all ages. Danced by 7 dancers from Moldova, Belarus and Ukraine. The performance toured the 3 countries and was shown in 11 cities. In connection to this project we have organized a festival on dance for and with children and youth in each of the three countries involved. In Sweden the performance was shown at Bibu in 2010.
- *Middrömmarsnatt*, *Alice?! and yxa.Sil.de*, children performances produced in Sweden.

[www.lavadans.com](http://www.lavadans.com)

[www.waitinginthemargins.org](http://www.waitinginthemargins.org)

[www.theprojecthome.org](http://www.theprojecthome.org)

**ASSOCIATION KULTURANOVA** is a non-governmental, non-profit organisation founded for stimulating and affirmation of art and cultural spirit. It was founded in May 2001 in Novi Sad (the capital of Vojvodina, region in Serbia). The organization was founded as “umbrella” association of various non-formal independent art groups and individuals, young artists from Novi Sad. The focus of the organisation is on development of urban youth culture and raising awareness on relevant social issues, with the vision of building creative platforms for youth in Novi Sad and in the region.

The main fields of our work are:

- festivals & events (culture)
- lectures, conferences (human rights, youth policy)
- workshops, seminars (education)

Association Kulturanova is very much concerned how art can effect environment and how it can benefit local communities. Through our activities we are promoting cultural diversity and cultural tolerance and we see cultural rights as an important part of human rights. We are doing most of our projects in partnership with many organisations from the region as well as from EU and doing this, we are promoting

the fight against xenophobia and encouraging collaboration among different cultures.

[www.kulturanova.org](http://www.kulturanova.org)

**SWEDISH INSTITUTE** is a public agency that promotes interest and confidence in Sweden around the world. SI seeks to establish cooperation and lasting relations with other countries through strategic communication and exchange in the fields of culture, education, science and business.

[www.si.se](http://www.si.se)



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- BACK COVER: BILJANA MIČIĆ, MILOŠ JEVTIĆ, AUDIENCE MEMBERS, installation July 2015 Temerin.



















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BE TECHNICALLY  
PREPARED  
EYE CONTACT

REALLY LISTEN!

STRAIGHT FORWARD QUESTIONS

BEING ATTENTIVE

INTIMATE

RELAXED ATMOSPHERE

CREATIVITY

WELL FORMULATED, THOUGHT THROUGH  
BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE

LOGICAL ORDER BUILD-UP

RESPECT (THE PERSON)

OBJECTIVE

PROVOKING

WELL-CHOSEN LOCATION

TO KNOW WHY - THE REASON FOR  
THE INTERVIEW

DRESS CODE

APPROPRIATE VOICE TONE

BEING ABLE TO IMPROVISE -  
REFORMULATING QUESTIONS

SUPERIOR

CONDESCENDING

LEADING QUESTIONS

MANIPULATIVE

PROVOKING

BEING DISTRACTED

UNINTERESTED

RUDE

CHIT-CHAT INSTEAD OF INTERVIEW

SUPERFICIAL

STEREOTYPICAL

QUESTIONS

"HOW DOES IT FEEL?"

INAPPROPRIATE MOMENTS  
INTERRUPTING

BEING HORNY FOR GOSPEL

CHewing GUM / SMOKING CIGARETTE / WEED

JUDGING

INVOLVING YOUR OWN OPINIONS

























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2014–2015

TEMERIN  
NOVI SAD

