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## MY FIRST IMPRESSIONS FROM THE EUROPEAN CONGRESS OF BIBLIO- DRAMA IN FINLAND

I have been interested in bibliodrama for six years. This year for the first time I participated in the European congress of bibliodrama. I had several intentions for my visit, but the most surprising thing was that God revealed to me what I least expected.

I decided to take part of the trip by bus and to go from Tallinn to Åland islands by ferry. I could choose a faster and shorter way, i.e. by plane, but I did not want this for two reasons. First, bibliodrama as a method of reading the Holy Scripture is very profound and powerful experience, requiring certain readiness and disposition. I felt that my body and mind needed a longer trip in order to get ready. The other reason was that travelling through Latvia and Estonia – countries whose culture and history I know was for me a bit safer than through Sweden, which I visited but still it seemed to me rather foreign.

Nice, lovely people, beautiful nature, in some way reminding me of my homeland; it seemed that even verses of the psalm did not reveal anything new or unexpected to me. I felt safe, loved, quiet, at times even tired of impressions.

On my way home from the European congress of bibliodrama, for several hours I had to wait for a bus in Tallinn. I decided to take a walk in the old town of Tallinn, which I visited quite a long time ago – in my study years. Looking at one of the church towers in Tallinn old town, I suddenly realized that for the first time in my life I was feeling safe in this world. It turned out that for a long time there was information embedded in my body and mind that the world is not safe, that it was divided into West and countries with Soviet experience. At this moment this division was gone... I am well-educated, travelling a lot, the one that loves to communicate with people from different cultures, open to new challenges, new experiences and therefore thought I was free from the influence of Soviet ideology. In this way God through the words of the 139th psalm gradually melted my Soviet experience that had occupied my body and mind...

During the European congress of bibliodrama, reading this psalm by mind, through bodily motion, photography, dance and chants invited people of various cultures to think over their cultural, historical and personal experience. Not only think over, but also make clear for myself which God or Gods I believe in, what the way of my nation is and where I am. Swedes, Germans, English, Austrians, Belgians, Swiss, Finns – the so called welfa-

re countries, and Hungary, Lithuania – post-soviet countries, a bit poorer, lacking, but catching up with the former. Welfare countries that value comfort, practicality, but are inclined to superficiality, individualism, consumerism. Post-soviet countries that underwent system's self-containment, did not have the freedom of word or religion, where human dignity was not valued, suffered more pain, but they retained more authenticity and profoundness. Each of these cultures has different light and different darkness, and it is understood differently. In each of them out of darkness light is born, while one can also go from light into the darkness of life. The two polarities that always accompany and will accompany us, and we will constantly be tried through them. The 139th psalm leads Western and Eastern societies into recognizing our true cultural, historical, personal darkness and light, irrespective of where we live, since none of these societies has true light and truth, for only going towards God one gets true eternal wings of dawn. „I am the light of the world“, speaks Christ. (Jn 8, 12).

The congress of bibliodrama helps people of various cultures go towards better mutual understanding, openness, sympathy, respect for one another, mutual help, spiritual communion and cooperation. A common prayer for Ukraine and other nations striving for their freedom and rights joined us together with the whole world and helped to understand how fragile this world is.

The European congress of bibliodrama helped each of us grow and nurture our personal as well as ethnic identity, become the ones that God created us to be, finding our personal calling in the eyes of God. Freed from false cultural and historical images, strengthened, having enriched one another by our spiritual warmth, respect, attention, communion, we acquired true wings of life. My hope is that each participant of the congress will bring home to their family and nation more concord, light, heart warmth, love, belief and hope.



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