Milan Jazbec
(Ed.)

A DAY IN DIPLOMACY:
The Rainbow Beyond the Soul



KULTURNI CENTER
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A Day in Diplomacy:
The Rainbow Beyond the Soul

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Milan Jazbec
(Ed.)

A Day in Diplomacy:
The Rainbow Beyond the Soul

Expanded English edition
The Badger School of Diplomacy
Book Three

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Acknowledgements

The third book in the series The Badger School of Diplomacy, like the two previous ones, offers a unique particularity.

The editorial monograph focuses on the editor's novel about diplomacy, The Rainbow Beyond the Soul. The novel was published nineteen years ago by the publishing house Miš and was then published in a second, expanded Slovene edition in 2019 by the publishing house Forma 7. The special feature of the second edition was that, in addition to the original story, it also contained all the accompanying words to the previous translated editions. This has increased the book's content and allowed readers to gain better insight into the novel and its ramified messages, not only about diplomacy, of course.

This expanded English edition is designed even more broadly. The author (and in this case also the editor) got the idea for such a volume when Ana Stefanovska published a paper in the international scientific journal European Perspectives in October 2019, during his Macedonian ambassadorial term, analyzing the novel from the perspective of geocriticism as a new genre in comparative studies. Her analysis focuses on (real) geographical locations in the (fictional) novel. This gave the novel a completely new dimension of understanding, which also opened up some entirely new perspectives on his own work for the author himself. From here to the idea for this book was just one step more to do.

Its concept and content are as follows: the book is divided into three parts.

The first part brings views or analyses of the novel The Rainbow Beyond the Soul from the pen of authors who are experts (most of them habilitated university teachers) in their fields, such as geocriticism,

international law, diplomatic studies, psychology and sociology. Here the result of their writing is twofold. On the one hand, from the perspective of their profession, they present and analyze the staging of diplomacy in the literary work, i.e., the present novel; how they see and understand diplomacy when reading this novel. But on the other hand, they also explain and present their own profession through the lenses of their writing. So, it is an interweaving of two interdisciplinary views in one. This is a completely new approach to presenting and analyzing diplomacy, which shows how each such research is always two-way, mutual, whether the author and the reader are aware of it or not. The editor's original intention was only the one explained in the first aspect, the second one was revealed to him through the process of preparing the monograph itself. The contribution of Natalia Shikova was crucial for recognizing this second understanding.

The second part brings together all the accompanying words that have been prepared for the novel's previous editions, including, of course, translations (their list is given at the end of the book), as well as a series of introductory words from various presentations of the novel in various settings. It is a colorful collection of texts written by very different profiles: from professors, politicians, diplomats, high school students to literary critics and others.

The third part brings the original novel, that is, the text that is the subject of study in the first two parts. The red thread of the unique story that this book weaves is thus rounded off. The editor is not aware of any similar book project at all, let alone in the field of studying diplomacy. The fact that this is a study of his book has mainly to do with the fact that the book was at hand due to numerous translations and presentations.

Each translation stands out in something and all together could be a new story. Let me name just two. The Turkish translation aroused great interest among the widest audience, and was prepared as a protocol project of the author – the then ambassador to that country. It was the first translation to Turkish in a series, which represents a typical example

of cultural diplomacy in the literary field. Upon the reprinting of the Albanian translation (the first edition was published immediately after the declaration of independence of Kosovo in the spring of 2008 and was thus the first foreign translated book in Kosovo at all), the author's colleague and friend, the Albanian ambassador to North Macedonia Fatos Reka, described the author as the first diplomat with a book in Albanian.

Since the contributions collected in this book were published in different publications (journals, monographs, textbooks), this fact is also reflected in the different ways of citing and citing notes. I have therefore not tried to standardize the latter here, while the citing of sources in the final list of bibliography is standardized. Probably due to the fact that all authors discuss the same literary work, although each from his/her own perspective, some topics or emphasis are repeated (there are a smaller number of quotations cited by several authors). However, I think that this is at best welcome for the readers' in-depth familiarization with diplomacy and its understanding, also of the novel itself. I hope that the book will contribute to a deeper knowledge and understanding of diplomacy, as well as literature and especially novels.

My thanks goes, as with the two previous books in this collection, to all who contributed their insights. A special thanks goes to my friend Ahmet Erçan Erdoğdu, the Slovenian Honorary Consul in Trabzon, Türkiye, for his generous support of this collection. Special thanks goes to my publisher, Publishing House Cultural Center Maribor, and New University, where I have been teaching diplomacy for many years, then to the authors of the forewords and both reviewers, and, of course, to my employer, the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs of Slovenia.

This concludes the journey to the third book in this collection.

Ljubljana, autumn 2025 M.J.

Note from the Publisher

The Badger School of Diplomacy book series is authored by Milan Jazbec, PhD, Ambassador and Professor of diplomacy, poet and writer, member of the first generation of Slovene diplomats, employed at the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs of the Republic of Slovenia.

The series brings his dwellings and contemplations of selected topics from the world of diplomacy he has belonged to during the last almost four decades. This is the period after the end of the Cold War that has marked him decisively in all aspects. Being a career diplomat, first of the former Yugoslavia (1987–1991) and then of the newly independent Slovenia, he draws from his rich diplomatic experiences as well as from his innovative academic contribution to diplomatic studies.

A Day in Diplomacy: The Rainbow Beyond the Soul, as the third book in the series, discusses portraying diplomacy in his novel The Rainbow Beyond the Soul. The first part brings a handful of academic as well other professional discussions on how diplomacy is being presented in this novel. The second part focuses on contributions from numerous translations of the novel as well as from its presentations. In the third part the original novel is reprinted to give to the current reader a comprehensive and simultaneous view on discussions and the story itself. This way the volume offers a rounded-up and unique picture of diplomacy, what it is all about and how fictional literature can contribute to the understanding of this millennia old profession.

As the title of the series suggests, more books are going to follow.

To new generations of diplomats who enter
diplomatic stage with courage and enthusiasm,
but also, with a dose of caution.

And to Zarja J.

Published on the occasion of the novel's coming of age.

Foreword to the expanded English edition*

Literature and Diplomacy: *A Guide to Escaping Administrative Burdens*

Can a diplomat write literature? In the past, we knew many writers who also worked as ambassadors or consuls, including Octavio Paz, St. John Perse, Pablo Neruda, as well as Sami Al-Droubi and Nizar Qabbani. All of them served in diplomacy. But in recent years, we no longer see this type of writer. This is the question that Milan Jazbec starts from in his book *"The Rainbow Beyond the Soul"*. Jazbec served as Slovenia's ambassador in many parts of the world and also pursued literary writing.

In this book, which combines imagination and personal reflection, the author tries to compare working in diplomacy with dedicating oneself to literature, and how it is possible to combine both. He explains the burdens of being an ambassador or consul and how to find time to free oneself from administrative work and focus on writing literature.

The author describes his diplomatic work as "very dynamic, tense, and exciting," but adds, "it can be boring at times." This challenges the common image of diplomats, where people think their lives are full of passion and travel, and boredom never enters their day-to-day life. Milan Jazbec reverses this image, showing that boredom is a real part of the job, caused by repeating the same activities, meetings, social interactions

* Text was originally published in Arabic as a book review in Al Quds Al Arabi on June 6, 2025.

with officials or ordinary people, which can make time feel wasted on similar tasks.

This routine often leads diplomats to writing. Another factor the author highlights is that a diplomat must read a lot. Each time they move to a new country, they need to understand it through reading books about the country or by its people. Diplomats are therefore among the most active readers. This heavy reading, combined with boredom, encourages them to write. Jazbec advises his colleagues to read so much that they "walk in the shoes of the locals," understanding the country's mindset to predict events that may affect actions.

The book gives us a view of a diplomat's life how they spend their days and nights, live publicly and privately, and spend long hours in meetings, often beyond scheduled times. Time is the enemy in this work; it drains energy and makes it difficult to dedicate oneself to writing and literature. Jazbec recommends that diplomats reconsider how they organize their time, to avoid wasting it on unnecessary tasks.

Diplomats also have another unseen duty: writing reports. "There is no diplomacy without report writing," he notes. He advises keeping reports short and precise to avoid turning the work into a burden. Boredom can be part of reading and writing, but it should motivate creativity, not become pressure. Diplomats should carefully write reports in a useful way, avoiding stress and wasted time. Another task often neglected is apologizing for not attending events, which is acceptable if it allows the diplomat to focus on literary work.

"*The Rainbow Beyond the Soul*" provides guidance for diplomats seeking a literary life, helping them escape administrative burdens to devote time to writing. It shows how a diplomat can balance duties, reading, and creativity.

Milan Jazbec is one of Europe's most experienced diplomats. He is a professor of diplomacy, promoted at the University of Ljubljana and teaches diplomacy at the New University, graduated from the Belgrade School of Diplomacy, and has served as Slovenia's ambassador to Macedonia, consul

in Austria, deputy ambassador in Scandinavian countries, and ambassador in Turkey, accredited also to Azerbaijan, Iraq, Lebanon, Syria, and Iran. Before all this, he worked as a journalist and published literary and academic works, successfully combining diplomacy and literature, making him able to share this experience in his book.

Said Khatibi*

* Said Khatibi is a renown Algerian writer, intellectual and journalist, member of the Slovene PEN, living and working in Slovenia. Among many awards he received is also the Sheikh Zayed Book Award for Young Author for the novel *The End of the Desert* (2023).

Foreword to the Slovene edition: *White, Endless Roads**

The steeps of diplomacy

I am sitting in front of the book Diplomacy in Words, Words in Diplomacy: The Rainbow Beyond the Soul, which is the third book in the collection "Diplomacy and Slovenehood"** by Prof. Dr. Milan Jazbec. I am overcome by a slight feeling of self-doubt regarding the writing of the introductory word to this book. As an observer of the author's life and an unfamiliar diplomat's work, I feel inadequate to give an opinion on his extensive journey through this book.

I am thinking about what to write down that is new, different from what has already been written… I know that everything about the author and his work has long been said in many languages. I feel as if I were standing in front of a steep wall with a demanding climbing route that has been climbed a thousand times. Everything in it has already been recognized, explored and experienced. Despite my fragility and transience, I am not afraid of the new steepness, so I bravely enter the unknown, icy landscape of diplomacy. I surrender myself with interest to the research, no matter how much it costs. Only in this way can I participate, at least for a short time, as an observer or witness.

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* From the author's poem "*White Paths*", published in her poetry collection "*White Peaks*" (2001).

** Note: this book was first published in Slovene, as mentioned by the author of this Foreword. This here is an expanded English version.

Step by step, this extensive book contains the rich thoughts of the sensitive soul of journalist, professor and doctor Milan Jazbec, who is a true lexicon of diplomacy. The theme of the third book in the Diplomacy and Slovenehood collection comes from the novel about diplomacy The Rainbow Beyond the Soul, which is the first part of the trilogy about diplomacy The Lady in White, which is accompanied by the already published second book In a Search for the Lost Soul. The third part, which will also be a novel, is in the progress and will certainly be special.

His attentive observation draws the reader into the world of reality that is not noticeable to everyone. As in a steep climbing wall, its fragments are revealed as handholds that the climber can recognize and feel only when he is in the immediate vicinity of the next handhold. The diplomatic connection is revealed through skillful, sometimes imperceptible, but always safe and effective approaches. How could the author have felt this experience if he had not been so judicious and excellent at his work? He was ground down by the cold winds of high, demanding, difficult to achieve sometimes tough goals. At the same time, the heights gave him a broader insight into the human soul and the interconnected expressions of this world. I was most touched by the realization of one of the paragraphs of the third chapter of the novel The Rainbow Beyond the Soul, entitled Untouched Hope.

Milan's horizon is expanded into a transcendent sense of life's challenges, experiences, and directions. His skill and art of negotiating has a very wide spectrum. He negotiates not only in international diplomacy, but very precisely and compassionately with himself. This is an expression of complete responsibility for his own life and the wider community in the area where he works. Through his works we realize that he is a great connoisseur of humanity both in diplomacy and in his pedagogical and mentoring work.

The exceptional importance of Milan's expressions in the business understanding of diplomacy and in his written works is enabled by the freedom of the individual. It is an inseparable part of the hard, but

wonderfully beautiful nature from which he comes as a child of hard-working, decent parents. The appeal of words led him in his early years to read stories that strengthened his knowledge and imagination, and settled in his blood. An important aspect of his life is satisfaction with the work he has done. With it, he realizes his creativity and establishes important contacts with people. His written works provide him with a sense of validity and significance in the wider community, a connection with people who are aware of what humanity needs and what is good for it. From his home Posavje plains in the South-East Slovenia, he bravely ascended demanding, unknown peaks, sometimes uncontrollable, but mostly safely climbed. Youthful boldness and shrewdness helped him on the path to goals that he confidently recognized as achievable. All the obstacles on the way gave him inspirations of a different dimension. He also diligently healed all the frostbite that occurred due to the difficult conditions of walking to the destination in his spiritual refuge.

Without words there is nothing

The perception of life experiences of well-rounded, educated people is mostly different. They are committed to being useful, they have many plans and visions for the future. Others are more relaxed about the challenges of life and are not persistent in realizing their ideas, because the calm flow of action is less demanding, does not cause injuries or risks when exposed. This is very recognizable in mountaineering, where the extreme powers of the climber are combined into great solutions to problems. The present book recognizes the opinions and attitude towards diplomacy of some famous people with a vigilant and diverse view of this world. The joint powers of cooperation produce more than just the work of an individual. In diplomacy, the word is the most reliable and effective tool, the word that detects the safe path to the goal. The hypocrisy of society is hidden in the details, which are shown in the texts precisely, but mysteriously and tolerantly to the understanding of their messages.

Touches from the heart

At first glance, Prof. Dr. Milan Jazbec seems like a modest, simple man, even though he is a top-notch writer. He is driven by a heart of enthusiasm that we admire in his professional work and beyond. He is constantly coming up with new ideas, new word connections, with which he strengthens his soul's need to write both professional and literary works. The aesthetics of the texts attract the reader and lead him to think about deeper truths. The superficiality of events is covered with insights from a higher, richer expression of man. As I mentioned at the beginning, I was particularly touched by the message of one of the paragraphs in the third chapter of his novel The Rainbow Beyond the Soul, entitled Untouched Hope:

"It's not always easy to understand or accept. Although it's the same with life: when the youthful rush of emotions and the intensity of excitement passes, then you overlook that it could be better. When you understand this, you have gained strength and inner peace; you have extended your license and tempered your soul. When you are not dependent on anyone, you are at your freest. And that's when you usually become lonely."

I recognize Milan's stories as marked paths in the mountains, which are reliable and safer than pathless or vertical directions of a peak. The author emphasizes a demanding approach to the goal of the story, uses precise, sensitive paths and at the top leaves all the views to the reader, allowing him a free view of the route traveled, while at the same time lovingly offering him a hand so that he does not slip into the abyss of the unknown. In the written stories, we can learn from each other, face life's difficulties decisively and embrace each other at the top when the closeness of the heart is recognized.

Milan's word is the foundation for direction, for a first-rate achievement that ensures success and the realization of the goal. I can write without reservation that Milan was completely conquered by the wealth

of words, which are an inseparable part of his way of life. His personal motivation for writing is not a coincidence, but a special phenomenon of a credible person whom people trust and believe. An upright, sharply oriented mindset is his direction of achievements. He must often ask himself the question, has he proven what he has learned between heaven and earth, has he created enough for his fellow human beings – readers and not just for himself?

Actions

Actions leave traces. The fate of the heroes remains a mystery; will they bear the weight of triumph, are they aware that they were given grace above all and with it a chance? The characteristics of Milan's era will crystallize, visible traces in the lethargy of the average. Prof. Dr. Milan Jazbec will continue to walk in his talent completely alone, with intuition and trust he will look back gratefully on the work done, on his great and successful deeds. His works will remain primarily Slovenian, carved into history as a work of art, made with love, committed to a time and space that will one day become the property of others. This book will remain, containing a sophisticated attitude of contemplation about life.

Let us be eloquent despite any doubts as we decide to embark on a common path of nobility, philanthropy, and courage, for these noblest of goals.

Šmatevž, October 2024 Magda Šalamon*

* Poet, painter, publicist, host of numerous original shows on TV Velenje, mountaineer and great connoisseur of mountains and Slovenian culture.

Outline:
On Words and Diplomacy

"It's only words
And words are all I have."

The Bee Gees, Words[1]

Diplomacy is about formal communication between different social communities, especially between societies that are organized into a political community, that is, a state, and about regulating their relations. This is one of the many definitions of diplomacy that is useful for our discussion. At the heart of this communication is, of course, the word. Diplomats observe, talk, and report. Briefly, they do words.

Therefore, they must be proficient in spoken and written words – in relation to the interlocutor, in his language or the jointly established language of communication, and in relation to their ministry, in their mother tongue. Generally speaking, literacy and eloquence are therefore built into the very essence of diplomatic work. A diplomat who does not have a good and proficient command of his own language will have difficulty communicating in foreign languages. And not only in communicating, it is about semantic nuances, linguistic finesse, messages between the lines, vagueness, whether intentional or accidental; how he applies it and what situations the diplomat is exposed to in the receiving state. It is also about diplomatic terminology and phrases that are an integral part of diplomatic language, often incomprehensible to the outside, ordinary world – but

[1] Words, a 1968 hit by the English rock band The Bee Gees.

the opposite is also true: if a diplomat uses ordinary, standard phrases instead of generally accepted phrases that are valid in the profession, it is not always necessary that he will be understood in what exactly he wants to communicate. This is an important specific feature of diplomatic work, diplomacy as a profession and activity.

The word is, so to speak, actually the diplomat's home. He feels as good in it as he has made his bed and chosen it, but also as he has been assigned. The word is a home. To make this home more pleasant, useful and more widely applicable, words must be nurtured, polished and dealt with, especially by reading and writing.

We can also read novels about diplomacy, or those where diplomacy is an important part of the narrative. This is the topic of this editorial monograph.

How to understand a literary work is a question that has existed since the human race began writing and, of course, reading. But the question of how to understand the novel, as arguably the most demanding, complex, and thematically and stylistically diverse literary work, is particularly challenging.

The book in front of us attempts to contribute to the answer of how to understand a novel about diplomacy as well as diplomacy as it is being portraited by that novel. Specifically, here we have in mind the editor's novel about diplomacy entitled The Rainbow Behind the Soul. On the one hand, this is illuminated for us by the authors of numerous explanatory notes to various editions of the novel, and on the other hand, by those who have read the novel and reflected on it from their own scientific perspective, such as international law, psychology, diplomatic studies, both theorists and practitioners, and the like. Such a very diverse view of the work, which is the subject of this book – the original text of the novel is also included – contributes to the understanding of two things.

First, how to understand this novel about diplomacy, and second, how to understand the scientific disciplines in light of which the individual authors of the contributions reflect on this novel. The editor, the author

of the novel, also contributed his own, with a short reflection in which he presents how this literary work came about, in short, how and why the novel was created in the first place.

Diplomacy in its various meanings and understandings (e.g., activity, skill, protocol, knowledge, foreign policy, organization) is a frequent subject of literary treatment, both by writers and diplomats, but also by both at the same time, namely writers who are diplomats and diplomats who are writers.[2]

As far as authors are concerned, we can speak of four groups, namely firstly writers, secondly diplomats, thirdly writers who are (were) diplomats, and fourthly diplomats who are writers. All of this can involve, on the one hand, a comprehensive literary interpretation of diplomacy as a subject of narration in novels (or literary works in general) and in diplomatic memoirs, and, on the other hand, a more or less present mention of diplomacy or touching on its aspects in individual works.

At the same time, when it comes to the presence of diplomacy in literary works, we can speak of two groups, namely, firstly, those works that are dedicated to diplomacy in its entirety, and secondly, those that use diplomacy or its individual aspects as an additional tool for their literary work. In all cases, however, it is true that diplomacy is useful and used for depiction in literature.

Let us add that in addition to the one discussed here (and its sequel, In a Search of a Lost Soul, 2017), there are quite a few novels about diplomacy in Slovenian literature. The first one is by renown Slovene author Ivan Tavčar Beyond the Congress (1905), then Ambassador in China (1987) by Vladimir Kavčič, and The Wall on the Border River Selan (1964) by Ambassador Mitja Vošnjak. Diplomacy is also partly present in the novels Donata (1991) by Ivo Zorman and The President (2009) by Dimitrij Rupel, and in the mini-series Sour Oranges (I-IV, 2000, 2012, 2018, 2023), by a diplomat under the pseudonym Božidar T. Dolenc, who autobiographically reflects on his diplomatic experiences.

[2] The following is partly summarized after Jazbec, 2013.

Having said all of the above, we can express our belief that there is much to learn about diplomacy by reading novels about diplomacy. Specifically, we can point out the following two aspects.

Firstly, diplomacy takes place in a wide variety of environments and situations, not all of which can be predicted in advance. Therefore, reading such novels helps to understand and simulate the functioning of diplomacy to a greater and better extent than mere diplomatic practice could teach us.

Secondly, we believe that diplomats – writers (and vice versa) when writing such novels, at least to a certain extent, draw on their own diplomatic experiences (e.g., Mission London, Alek Popov, 2016). In my opinion, this provides additional insight into diplomacy and a source of further knowledge about it, both for general readers and especially for diplomats. In this way, we try to confirm the importance of reading this type of literature as an added source for learning about and studying diplomacy, not only for the general public, but especially for diplomats as well.

And perhaps thirdly, reading novels or literary works about diplomacy contributes to the enrichment of one's own language, its expressive ability and development. And in the Slovenian case, this is certainly a contribution to the functioning of Slovenian as the language of diplomacy. After more than three decades of the state's history this is still in full development.

In conclusion, we again refer to words, which are there, as they were at the beginning. This is their position that also determines diplomacy, as we have tried to present in this reflection, and as this book tries to show. We can also add that everything revolves around words – human, as a cognitive being, can convey his thoughts, feelings, perceptions and everything that defines him as homo sapiens, through words. This is enormous, because words are an infinite universe and a living entity that grows, expands and changes, and fundamentally our essence is hidden in them.

Let the growing flood of words in this book be an opportunity to journey through a part of diplomatic life and its diverse wording.

M. J.

Božena Forštnarič Boroje[86]

Afterword to the Slovene Edition: *Words, Many of Them. This All Is Also Diplomacy.*

Words. Warm, wise, screaming, full or emptiness, perhaps even without meaning or significance. All of these and more are words, falling like rain. They are the tools of a diplomat. We look for the right ones, we refine them, we twist them, occasionally we even overturn them, all the way to the extreme point where they are no longer useful. Every now and then, let's be honest, we also devour them. All for a higher goal, they say. And as they can warm us, they can also chill us. Sometimes they kill. Their balance is therefore important, as is the opportunity for silence. Silence gives, but says little. In the absence of words, in the end, all we are left with is a look, into the eyes. And silent sincerity. If we have it, maybe we will see a person through the window of the soul. Maybe, who knows, we will even see a rainbow.

A few weeks before leaving for Turkey, the next destination on my list, I was headed from Mladika[87] to the corner of Čopova and Slovenska streets. In front of the post office in the city center, I was supposed to meet my future boss, Ambassador Jazbec. Milan, my father's namesake. I found this fact, namesake, particularly interesting. Up until then, even though I was already in my late thirties, I had never met another Milan.

[86] Career diplomat, Director General for Multilateral Affairs at the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs of the Republic of Slovenia, Master of Law, Ambassador to Poland (2019-2024), non-resident accredited to Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, and Deputy Ambassador to Turkey (2013-2015).

[87] In jargon Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs of Slovenia.

Anyway, those late winter days the weather was still quite rudely sullen, and the ambassador was briefly at home. An opportunity to get to know each other in person before I joined him on location in Ankara for the next few years. Each from his own direction, coming towards you, both punctual. Just like in the picture, maybe a year older. Tall, slender, almost ascetic, short-cropped hair, slightly graying beard. A bit Turkish. We shake hands in greeting. Božena. Milan. I'm happy! Next comes a half-hour coffee somewhere warm, and in about a month, moving.

Nowadays, life in Turkey seems quite distant to me, as if decades have passed. Certainly, there are still some very vivid memories, literally drawn before my eyes. Feelings as if they were from yesterday. And some glimpses added in layers. They come occasionally, never at once, somehow in waves. In the mass of what remains, a dusty canvas. Forgotten by its own. Lying there somewhere, at the bottom. In the hidden corners of the little brain, it awaits revival. Like a labyrinth of attics in old houses. If only the doors didn't creak so much, constantly getting stuck, everything would be much easier.

Conversations. The best were those over a decent steak and a glass of red wine. Most often Turkish, Kavaklıdere. Sometimes Lebanese on the coast of northern Beirut, occasionally Azerbaijani in the city of provisional light, but never Iraqi or Iranian. For a reason, of course. But the wine was not essential. What was essential was the stream of thoughts that flowed down the riverbed. Unrestrained. We talked about almost everything. Work, society, work in general, students who came to us for internships, about what was good and what wasn't, about books, writing, professorships, poetry. Challenges, this and that, small problems, big problems. And about home. Sometimes we also started some philosophical ones, about everything and nothing at the same time. I liked those the most. Lost in the universe of everything. But you also have to eat and earn your bread!

Question. Being in the service of diplomacy or diplomacy as a service? No definitions this time, at least academic ones. More like the chicken and the egg and what came before. Nothing. Nothing came before and then everything came. Magma of thoughts like a biblical deluge. Write, just do

it, you would usually say with such and similar things launched. With a smile, of course. And that would be it, without controversy, no raising of eyebrows, just encouragement. Even when it really went tough and when you can only rely on each other. Work doesn't happen by itself, it has to be done, even in diplomacy. And there is only as much time as there are hours in the day. And there are never enough of them, just like pairs of hands. I used to imagine diplomacy as a creation on the edge of abstract art. Marina Abramović, with a dark face, sitting in the corner of a consular cell, alternately raised eyebrows and directed gazes, sometimes at the ceiling, sometimes at the floor. Ticking to the quarter, pure business performance. Unfortunately, or fortunately, there is little of this experience in my case. Diplomacy, when stripped of all unnecessary trappings and excess ballast, is ultimately a craft. And you have to be skilled at it.

Hotel Europe, Baku, Azerbaijan. Hired driver and escort at a non-residential location. The first one drives, the second one speaks English. They pick us up just early enough for a comfortable break through the morning traffic. The smell of gasoline, cars left, right, meter by meter ahead. Address. Do we know where we're going? Yes, yes! Relaxed chatting, observing through the window. One last reminder, a review of the memo for the meeting at the Delegation of the European Union. Everything under control, already talking about where to go next. Arrived, a full twenty minutes early. That was fast! Nothing happens, we park near the entrance and wait in the car. So that we don't get cold outside, but arriving too early is also not appropriate. Minutes pass and quite by chance, already a little bored, I look outside and up towards the illuminated sign.

Funny, I comment. What's up, you reply. That the EU Delegation of all people has offices in the Hotel Europe. Unique, but lovely. Damn lovely, wrong address! Broken English. Something, something. EU Delegation ≠ Europe Hotel. Yes, yes, no, no… oh, no! Now let's race to the right address. We would have arrived just in time if we hadn't run out of gas on the way – the warning light on the gas station is almost out, a stop at there is absolutely necessary, and on top of that, the police stop us just before

we get there – a traffic control, what else! Finally at our destination, half an hour late. This time in front of the real Europe, at the right address. A friendly greeting, an apology on the spot, the conversation flows, and it's only half past nine in the morning. In diplomatic language, we would call this a dynamic morning.

There were other occasions, quite a few of them. Just as fun, but also much more serious. Rescuing refugees from Aleppo is just one of them. Exciting, burdensome, tiring. A little bit of everything, as in life itself, it's not just milk and honey that flows. And visits, this and that. True, true, there is never a shortage of dignitaries, neither here nor there. And rightly so. And books, oh, books, lots of them! Writing, translating, publishing. Turkish, Arabic. Paper, binding, printing. What a teacher, what a mentor!

And finally, what can we say about the rainbow novel, the fiction that makes love with reality? With the experienced diplomatic world. Do we let it live on, endlessly, kneaded through the fingers of many hands, or does it convince us more as a whole circle, without a single unpleasant corner? It sounds scary. Like the Minotaur, reproaching itself for carrying the head of a bull on its shoulders. Wrong world! Maybe this time, just without a bad conscience, let us leave the weight of these words behind us. Unfinished, let them remain behind us, for another time.

At our last meal, not long ago, the conversation touched on a little bit of everything. And you were shining. You said it had flared up again. Who, what? You said the heart, the heart inside you, was burning again. In the blink of an eye, I even thought for a second that I might say something more, something insanely clever. But there was no need, the silence was stronger this time, wiser. All that followed was a smile and a voice inside me: if it burns, let it burn!

In a forest full of many branches, the word "thank you" is not enough, for I have grown in the shelter of yours and continue to grow. And like you, maybe, one day, I will be a tree for someone else along the way.

In early December 2024 ▪

Addendum

Diplomacy and Slovene Painting – *Magda Šalamon: Forest (2015)*[88]

The intertwining of the mission of diplomacy to develop friendly relations between nations and states and the human desire for artistic reflection of creation can be seen as a point of contact between two activities that, at least at first glance, are far apart. But of course, they are not: diplomacy is woven into the very essence of human relations, as it ensures personal contact in the diplomatic field with representatives of other countries and no one can replace this, while fine arts are also an authentic, natural, even intimate bond between people, regardless of the differences between them. And it is about ties, about contacts between people, and also about how to develop them, not just maintain them, and how to bridge everything that leads or could lead to conflicts.

In their work, when performing diplomatic functions (representing their state, consular protection, negotiations, observation and reporting, and developing friendly relations), diplomats use their knowledge, skills and abilities, and increasingly also knowledge from other scientific disciplines and professional fields. And not only that – in their mission, everything that leads to achieving these goals comes in handy when they represent their states and work on their behalf.

[88] The essay is a continuation of the content, and partly an upgrade, of those published in the first and second books from the series "Diplomacy and Slovenehood". Each time it consists of three parts: the first presents the synergy between diplomacy and Slovenian painting, the second a selected illustration and the third a specific author. Therefore, the first part is usually quite similar each time, although partly also elaborated, while the second and third are different each time, although with the same message.

Therefore, it is not necessary to say that diplomats know and understand more than just the basics of their profession. When a diplomat concludes the official part of the conversation, the conversation often continues in a relaxed atmosphere, and this is where the diplomat's breadth, education, culture, and knowledge of various fields and topics come into play. All of this creates an atmosphere for good cooperation, for easier fulfillment of tasks and achievement of goals. And in doing so, the diplomat also creates a good impression of his country, its culture, art, science, and many other things: also by knowing a lot about the host state, its history, culture, and other things. A good atmosphere is a guarantee for reaching agreements.

For this reason, fine arts, with their messages and products, are very suitable to complement diplomatic work, the atmosphere and the results of this activity. In short, to help diplomats with this. We can easily imagine how great and magnificent an impression an exhibition of a world-famous artist makes in the receiving state, which diplomats of the sending state organize, for example, on their national holiday, on the occasion of a high-ranking visit or an important anniversary.

Fine arts (painting, sculpture, architecture, design, etc.)[89] are an artistic, confessional, critical, symbolic reflection of reality, as well as an expression of feelings experienced by the artist, or imagined by others to be experienced, and through artistic creation they enable this. And it helps in personal or collective, in pleasant company, experiencing the beautiful, noble, good. And all this comes in handy in diplomatic work. Aesthetics and ethics complement diplomatic work to a significant extent. That is why the messages of every art are so universal and so generally applicable; they transcend all boundaries and limitations.

Let's look at some of the outstanding ways in which the visual arts can contribute to diplomatic work. In this series of essays in our book collection, we focus on painting.

[89] For more on the modern, broad concept of fine art, cf. https://www.gov.si/zbirke/javne-objave/javni-razpis-za-izbor-kulturnih-projektov-na-podrocju-vizualnih-umetnosti-za-leto-2023/

First and foremost, a painting as a diplomatic message, a kind of diplomatic dispatch, but intended primarily for the wider public of the receiving state. However, unlike a dispatch, which must be equally understandable to all recipients, and is therefore short, concise, and rather sparse, with some brief comment and proposals at the end, a painting is something completely different: an artistic statement, understandable to everyone in its own way, although certainly also with some common, universal message, a living creation, so to speak, changing according to the inspiration, feelings and emotions, the background of both the painter and each audience, their social backgrounds, personal feelings, anything and everything. And that is precisely why a painting can function as a diplomatic dispatch, albeit for a different audience, because it approaches everyone, each in their own, unique, original way. It brings them nearer and brings them closer. This is diplomacy.

A painting can express a diplomatic message in a direct way, such as the painting The Ambassadors (1533), by Hans Holbein the Younger (also: Jean de Dinteville), which depicts a diplomat at work, equipped with books, and represents, according to the profession, one of the most masterful portraits from the Renaissance period.[90] A significant addition are books. Diplomats have to draw knowledge from somewhere and pass it on, and these are books. Therefore, diplomats, when they retire, are also expected to continue what they did during their active employment: write, only no longer dispatches, but books about what they did.

Portraits, in which each image and each object radiate numerous and diverse messages, which have not yet been fully deciphered and explained, which means they are also useful in different temporal, spatial and social contexts. This is true diplomacy at work, namely, the communication and reception of symbols, as emphasized by Hans Morgenthau, one of the founders of the realist theory of international relations, who in his fundamental work Politics Among Nations (1995: 660–667) says that

[90] https://artsandculture.google.com/asset/the-ambassadors/bQEWbLB26MG1LA?hl=en

a diplomat in the receiving state sends symbolic messages and exposes himself or herself to the symbolic messages of the representatives of the receiving state and the diplomatic corps.

In the same sense, we can also understand the detail illustrating the atmosphere at the Congress of Vienna, as seen on the cover of Kissinger's book Diplomacy (1994). Incidentally, the editor of this monograph (hereinafter: this editor) wanted to have a detail from a painting by a Slovenian painter in the same style for the cover of his book Diplomatic Handbook (2009), depicting the atmosphere at the Ljubljana Congress of 1821. With the help of experts, it was practically established that this major event in the diplomatic history of our region did not inspire any Slovenian painter.[91] There are, however, a number of depictions, but not by Slovenian painters.[92]

But a picture can also express a diplomatic message in an indirect way, so that it is related to some diplomatic event, action, etc., but this is not obvious at first glance. Such is, for example, the picture of Ljubljana on Easter 1848, i.e., during the Ljubljana Congress. We can also consider the covers of various editions of the novel The Ambassadors, by Henry James.[93]

Then, the painting can speak or express a message that can be used and understood in a diplomatic context, when it comes to a painter who is internationally established or has worked in the international environment. And socialized with diplomats or is part of this context. In Slovenian painting, such persons include, for example, Ivana Kobilca, Zoran Mušič and Jože Ciuha, as well as Božidar Jakac and his friendship with Harald Severud, a renowned Norwegian composer and conductor (Jakac depicted him in a masterful portrait in 1922).

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[91] The cover of the book therefore features the National Government of Slovenia, appointed on October 31, 1918.

[92] Cf. e.g. https://www.visitljubljana.com/sl/kongresni-urad-ljubljane/zakaj-ljubljana/skoraj-pozabljeni/200-obletnica-ljubljansko-kongresa/

[93] Google browser shows a series of headlines on https://www.google.com/search?q=henry+james+the+ambassadors+covr+page+painting

When this editor was charge d'affaires a. i. in Sweden (diplomatic coverage of five Nordic and three Baltic states), in the spring of 1997 we organized an exhibition of works Božidar Jakac in Bergen, where a memorial museum was opened in Severud's hometown. It was officially opened by the Norwegian King Harald II., and the opening was also attended by the Slovenian President Kučan in a entirely informal capacity.[94] His meeting, including extensive informal discussion, with the Norwegian King, which was the first meeting of President Kučan with any of the seven European monarchs, lasted a good half a day. If it were not for Jakac's friendship with Severud, the meeting of the two sovereigns would not have been possible (and before that, of course, it was necessary to find out about the opening of the museum and the royal participation, get the idea for the meeting, persuade the Norwegian side to accept it, and then carry it all out). The above is a textbook example of the synergy and complementarity between diplomacy and fine arts mentioned in the introduction.

The diplomatic message of a work of art can also come to life in its actualization in a literary work that talks about diplomacy. For example, this editor used a detail from the painting The Allegory of the Spring (1470/1480), by the Italian Renaissance master Sandro Botticelli, for the cover of his first collection of short stories about diplomacy, entitled Diplomats in New Clothes (2023). And for the second book in the collection Diplomatic Chronicles, entitled Triptych to an Unknown Diplomat (2024), he used the painting Light in a Glade (2015) by Magda Šalamon (her painting Forest is on the cover of this book, as is her foreword to it).

[94] As a not only diplomatic curiosity, I would like to add that we did not find any appropriate standard diplomatic term to name the meeting (official meeting, working visit, visit, etc.) and therefore we simply reported that they met informally. This dry form does not and cannot reflect the cordial and warm atmosphere during the visit. And if the visit were of any formal nature, the question is whether such a cordial atmosphere could have arisen at all. Diplomatic forms are rigid and strict (although diplomacy as an activity is very open), the higher you go, the more they are. This is just part of this ancient business.

A diplomatic message can also be expressed through the contextualization of the image itself, e.g., how can we discern from it the relationships between people, the emotions of the depicted protagonists, whether it is possible to discern empathy or some other moods and, above all, what we want to say with it in a specific context and moment of international relations. Psychological aspects and knowledge of psychology are increasingly important for the work of diplomats and fine art, or painting in particular, is a very useful medium here.

A painting in itself can be a powerful means of diplomatic expression and communication. One such example is the world-famous tapestry that hangs in the Great Hall of the United Nations Palace, where the Security Council meets. The tapestry, which is practically a mural, is positioned to protect the back of the chairman (monthly rotation), metaphorically speaking, in the hall where issues of world peace and security are discussed and decided. The artwork was created by Norwegian painter Per Lasson Krogh as a gift to the world organization and its most important body. Its key message, woven into the subtle gesture of the lady in the center, is a call for peace. This editor devoted an important place to this artwork and its message in his novel about diplomacy Rainbow Beyond the Soul (2006).

Any painting can also be a diplomatic gift; a diplomat receives or hands them over, as he pleases and as is most appropriate for the performance of a diplomatic mission, as a rule, again, on a symbolic level. Mice Jankulovski, a multimedia Macedonian artist, a global pioneer of critical caricature and owner of the Skopje Osten Gallery, organizer of the World Caricature Biennial, gave this editor a beautiful graphic on the occasion of his farewell and the end of the Macedonian mandate. Another special genre are paintings – portraits of diplomats. For example, the Dutch embassy in Ankara is adorned with a series of portraits of the earliest Dutch ambassadors, including the first one, of course, at the Byzantine court in the 17th century.

Portraits of diplomats or diplomatic portraits are a special aspect of the connection between diplomacy and painting. To the above, let us

add that the commissioning of diplomatic portraits in the past was primarily a reflection of a special high culture that cherished portraits and their possession. Diplomats also ordered their own portraits because this signified breadth of spirit, represented an aspect of aristocratic practice, and this act was also to a certain extent a matter of aristocratic and thus diplomatic prestige.[95] Diplomatic portraits were an important part of the diplomatic decor and interior of both embassies and residences.

Let's go a step further and say that diplomats were not only writers, but also painters.[96] Among the latter, the Viennese diplomat and painter Franz von Eugen Ransonnet-Villez (1838–1926) is particularly famous. From an early age, with the encouragement and support of his parents, he studied painting and later law, which led him to a job at the Imperial Foreign Ministry in 1858. He combined his professional ambition with his passion for painting and research. The latter was brought to its full expression by the former, as he travelled extensively as a diplomat, and he wrote extensively about all this in his books.[97] His marine research, underwater painting and interest in zoology practically overshadowed his diplomatic career (Palestine, Egypt, India, Japan).[98] In painting circles, he is known internationally as the founder of a new painting movement, i.e., underwater painting (mostly practiced in what was then Ceylon).

The prominent Habsburg diplomat, the Slovene Baron Josef Schwegel (Jožef Švegel, 1836-1914), commissioned a portrait of his daughter Marija, who had died shortly before, from him in 1875, as a colleague and acquaintance. The painting, oil on canvas, is kept by the National

[95] Let us not just note in passing that portraiture as a specific genre of painting experienced its practical decline with the emergence and development of photography.

[96] Here we are talking about diplomat-writers and diplomat-painters. This should be distinguished from writers who entered the diplomatic service and painters who entered the diplomatic service.

[97] https://publicdomainreview.org/collection/underwater-landscapes-of-eugen-von-ransonnet-villez/

[98] https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eugen_von_Ransonnet-Villez

Gallery in Ljubljana.[99] It is a rare example of a portrait of a diplomat's child, i.e., a daughter, painted by a painter–a diplomat, an acquaintance and colleague of the father.

For our discussion, Franz von Eugen Ransonnet-Villez is additionally interesting as an illustration of the synergy between diplomacy and painting. It emphasizes the importance of diplomacy's openness and receptiveness to various areas of human activity, which in diplomacy are always in the function of fulfilling its mission. At the same time, it shows the importance of diplomats' broader knowledge and familiarity with the fields of culture, art, science, and the like. Diplomacy is far from just a job or profession; it is above all a mission and a life determination.

In short, a painting, a work of art, is a very important and useful means of diplomatic action. The synergy and complementarity between the two areas is pronounced and, when used in practice, represents a sophisticated and subtle upgrade and understanding of diplomacy as a profession and mission and fine art as a means of expression. Their synthesis is art in the true sense of the word, as the diplomatic classic Satow (1994:3) says in his definition that diplomacy is an art practiced by diplomats, while another classic Nicolson (1988:3-5) adds that diplomacy is an abstract skill or talent, which falls within the same message framework.

Let us now move on to a completely concrete topic on the relationship between diplomacy and fine arts, or painting, that is, a Slovenian painting.

The painting Forest (2015), a work by painter Magda Šalamon, adorns the cover of this monograph, the third in the series The Badger School of Diplomacy.

The painting was created based on a motif from Menina Planina, a mid-mountain plateau in the Kamnik-Savinja Alps, central Slovenia, largely overgrown with forests over a hundred years old. The author got the idea for the painting on one of her hikes on this plateau.

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[99] Kajfež Kamin, 2018: 175 and 186 (portrait).

Her painting is full of powerful diplomatic messages. In diplomacy, as in ancient forests, tradition is important, and this is a kind of strength, but also wisdom. A Latin saying claims that in the forest lies the solution ("In silva salus").[100] The forest, behind the original sea and the later savanna, is today the fundamental natural space of man, a habitat that reflects the complementarity and intertwining of life, relationships between people and their coexistence, both with nature, which is our fundamental determinant, and among people themselves. This complementarity stems from the painting, in which trees of different sizes, ages and meanings intertwine and complement each other; each is something special and all together they create an even greater specialness. In diplomacy, cooperation, mediation and exchange, complementarity, striving for the final result are important, as the trees in the painting climb to the top, grow and mature.

All this liveliness and vibrancy, which we can easily feel, despite the fact that each picture is a static reflection of a dynamic reality, quickly leads us to the following simple wisdom: we must always be careful not to lose sight of the forest for the trees. Translated into diplomatic language, this means that diplomats must be able to place the events they monitor, analyze, and report to their governments about, and advise them on, always in a concrete social and political framework. Contextualize it. Determine what certain circumstances communicate at a given moment, what they mean, and what could happen based on this.

This is not possible if diplomats – or admirers of the painting, of any kind, for that matter – are not also able to understand the significance of the individual trees in this forest, in the weaving of the final image, which must ultimately be understood as a whole. Therefore, diplomats must not react immediately, but must wait, observe and then analyze, report, propose; a painter must also think, observe, images of nature must be imprinted on his subconscious, he must experience them and then pour them onto the canvas. This does not happen quickly and immediately and

[100] See Vilman, 2013.

easily, for this one must take time and have peace. One must carefully and cautiously apply colors to the base, just as a diplomat must carefully and with a sense of expression compose words and sentences and thoughts into clear, rounded, short contents, to write dispatches. From words that reflect what is seen, and what is in the background.

Just as diplomats must feel the breath of time, its melody and the whisper of circumstances, such a painting is a masterpiece when we can sense from it the hidden, soft and caressing singing of the flute, skillfully held in the hands of Pan, the ancient Greek mythological god of forests, wilderness and pastures, the master of pastoral music. He is not visible, hiding behind tree trunks and in the thicket, but we feel him to be there.

When we look at Magda Šalamon's paintings and the overflow of colors in them, the merging of nature and man, which returns us to the ancient whole of creation, especially the painting on this cover, when we observe her Forest, it seems as if the colors gently, slightly shifted, almost mysteriously flow, overlap, complement each other, as if the painter's brush were playing with them, and in an instant we could find ourselves in a world of music, where we would be lulled by Pan's flute and its melody. As if we were in a remote, hidden, quiet forest clearing, sitting in the summer grass, and from somewhere out there, sounds, a melody, would come to us, embracing us, as if the colors of the forest rainbow were embracing us.

Of course, in the diplomatic world, which must observe and understand real political events, there is little room for such elevated sensitivity. Yet Gozd tells us that diplomatic work is full of changing meanings of phrases that convey the messages of interlocutors. These create the image of a diplomatic message that is easily misunderstood, miscommunicated, and misused. The Forest (i.e., *Gozd*) leads us to the correct understanding and helps us do so.

An aesthetic and pleasing combination for a painting motif that stirs the imagination and caresses the soul. And which is also capable of reflecting diplomatic symbolism and its message.

Magda Šalamon[101], a painter, poet, publicist, mountain guide, alpinist, host of reportage and talk shows on Velenje television, fills her life with versatile creation. Creation is embedded in the very essence of her personality and identity. This is reflected and expressed in a variety of ways, approaches and aspects, all of which intertwine into an original combination of a sensitive personality with a broad spirit and thoughtful depth. In the broadest sense, she is inspired by nature and the place of man in it, and especially the mountain world, where her experience of the Himalayas as a source of personal inspiration and enrichment holds a special place.

In her mountaineering career, she has climbed most of the routes in the Slovenian mountains, completed a number of the most difficult climbs in the European Alps, and been to the Himalayas sixteen times, including in 2009, participating in memorial expedition to mark the 30th anniversary of the world echoed Yugoslav expedition to Mount Everest in 1979. Her highest Himalaya peak is Imja Tse (6189 m).

She is a member of the art section of the Cultural and Artistic Society in the city of Žalec and is active in various areas of interest in her local community. Because of this, she is a kind of hidden, perhaps even a little back stage spiritus agens of this environment, in which she works with outstanding results, but as such she does not stand out and does not come to the forefront, but prefers to remain in the background.

She publishes extensively and regularly in Planinski vestnik, monthly bulletin of Planinska zveza Slovenije (The Slovene Alpine Association) her reports are a model example of linguistically crafted texts, with a sense of nature and man, conveying the importance of contact with the primeval environment and are dressed in a lyrical-confessional style. She presents all of this in her monthly authored television series with the common title "Touches of the Mountains", of which she has prepared, recorded, edited and hosted 230 in the past decade. These are superbly produced

[101] https://www.mojaobcina.si/prebold/novice/v-preboldski-knjiznici-razstavlja-magda-salamon.html

shows by the author, who is also an excellent expert on Slovene and foreign mountains. This is a unique combination and allows her to promote Slovenian mountains, mountaineering, alpinism and hiking in particular in an in-depth, subtle and popular way. No one in the Slovenian media space has ever created such a series, neither in quantity nor in quality, regardless of the topic. Such an extensive and thematically focused opus is also rare by European standards. In Slovenia, this is the largest thematic and expert television promotion of mountaineering as an activity and mission to date. Over the past decade and a half, she has also produced 240 interviews of various kinds for Radio Prebold (until the end of its broadcasting). The total of all her original radio and television extended authored contributions (interview and reportage) thus exceeds 500.

As a person, she is committed to nature and Slovenehood. Therefore, she is a proven humanist and cosmopolitan, having published four poetry collections so far: White Peaks (2001), Under the Hand of Fate (2004), Shining Bird (2012) and Wrapped Light (2014).

Magda Šalamon's painting oeuvre is permeated with a special and subtle sense of the symbiosis of man and nature. Her depictions reflect the ancient contact that enriches man and makes him strong, but at the same time grateful for the creation from which he comes and of which he is a part. This message is extremely important in today's hyperglobalized times. Only in coexistence with nature can one find the meaning of action. Magda Šalamon depicts the high mountains and grateful nature with a unique style that indicates her involvement in the primal essence of humanity and in the depths of the spirit, spread by the primal inspiration of life dependent on the Earth. This shows her cosmopolitanism, which has deep roots in her native land. The openness of a free spirit and the vastness of the soul are a direct reflection of her high-mountain, especially Himalayan, experiences and insights.

The painter, who creates in watercolor, oil and acrylic techniques, is adorned with perseverance, determination and courage. A person with such a character can cope with the most difficult life challenges and

tests. Therefore, it seems that these character traits are hidden behind the constant overflow of selected colors and through individual shades they make this known and point to the author's life story. If we were to delve into the deeper layers of her painting confession, as in a medieval palimpsest, we might be able to detect expressions of quietly flickering longing, desires and wills. Her paintings are like poetry that brings knowledge about the world and the man in it through colors, they are like footsteps in colors.

Her painting Forest, which adorns the cover of the third book in the series The Badger School of Diplomacy, is an authentic illustration of the author's creative work and at the same time conveys important diplomatic messages.

M. J.

Jožef Kunič[102]

Milan Jazbec (Ed.): **A Day in Diplomacy:** ***The Rainbow Beyond the Soul***

I can only evaluate the present book from the perspective of a diplomat and cannot assess its literary value on its merits.

The book consists of three parts. The first part is articles selected by the author on the depiction of diplomacy, the second part is prefaces (or forewords) or accompanying words to the foreign editions of the book The Rainbow Beyond the Soul, and the third part is the book The Rainbow Beyond the Soul itself.

The book undoubtedly represents an important contribution to the stock of literature, which is fiction in its style, but has diplomacy as its basis. There are countless professional books in the field of diplomacy on a global scale, and quite a few in Slovenia as well, but there is almost no fiction in this field. In this sense, the book is important. The third part, the novel The Rainbow Beyond the Soul, which was published in 2006 (as the first part of the Lady in White trilogy), is a novel based on thoughts about diplomacy. This novel was followed by the book In a Search of a Lost Soul (2017), and we are still waiting for the release of the third part of the aforementioned trilogy. This would be an additional contribution to the stock of the aforementioned literature.

[102] Dr. Jožef Kunič, retired career diplomat, first Slovenian ambassador to Iran (1993-1997) and later to France (1997-2001), co-founder, long-time president and honorary president of the Slovenian Society for International Relations, associate professor of economic diplomacy at the European Centre for Peace and Development in Belgrade, a Peace University established by the UN.

I think that the book represents a significant contribution to the popularization and thus also indirectly to the progress of the profession. Narrowly oriented, often somewhat boring books on diplomacy are picked up mainly by diplomats and only a handful of others, especially those interested in this field. Fiction, on the other hand, is picked up by a wider circle of readers.

The quality of the work in terms of its composition is interesting. The first part aims to introduce the reader to the depiction of diplomacy, which is important for many who have an incomplete, often completely distorted knowledge of diplomacy. That is why the first part is important. This, the first part, literally summarizes or brings together articles that were written in connection with the book Rainbow Beyond the Soul. The articles, in which the same thoughts are often repeated, mainly refer to the experiences, emotions, desires, ideals and troubles of a diplomat. They summarize, sometimes literally, ideas about what a diplomat should be like, what his or her qualities should be, and many other views related to the personality of a diplomat. They also outline the principles and methods of operation of the United Nations, since this institution appears to a significant extent in the basic novel itself. However, these articles largely refer to literary assessments, which in my opinion are rightly very positive. Of course, they do not omit a few judgements about the Nobel Prize, namely the prize for literature, even though one might expect a diplomat to receive the most sacred of the Nobel Prizes, the Peace Prize.

It is not clear what the second part is for. It is a literal list of forewords to various editions of the book The Rainbow Beyond the Soul, as well as a foreword to the second part of the aforementioned trilogy, the book titled In a Search of the Lost Soul. The authors of the forewords are quite different in their professions, and the forewords themselves also differ in their composition, but their common denominator is a fairly complimentary assessment together with a description of the work. We cannot conclude from this chapter what kind of response, what kind of effect the edition printed there had on the target or general audience.

The part therefore acts more like self-praise, a demonstration of the fact that the book was published in all the places listed. In this sense, this set of forewords is interesting in itself, but no significant contribution can be seen to the quality of the work as a whole.

The title of the second part is significant: It's all in the words. At first glance, this may indeed be the case, but from a professional standpoint, many authors object to this. Words are not the only weapon of a diplomat; some other qualities are at least equally important. Abba Eban says something like this about the weapons of diplomats: "Their weapons are words and opportunities (not just words). In important events, opportunities fly by and if we miss them, we cannot fix it". We also know from experience that the reputation that a person brings with them is important, as well as their references from past diplomatic activities. It is not for nothing that the slogan "It doesn't matter what one says, it matters who says it".

Although Harold Nicolson says that an important quality of a diplomat is "coolness", a diplomat naturally has his own ideals to which he strives. It is worth emphasizing, however, that a lack of coolness, which can turn into hot-bloodedness, is definitely not desirable. The limit is usually determined in some way by experience. The protagonists in Dr. Jazbec's novels are emotionally strong personalities, they do not turn into hot-bloodedness, but they are not far from it.

The United Nations, which plays an important role in the ambitions of the protagonist in The Rainbow Behind the Soul, has in the recent not-so-short period been a complete toothless tiger in solving key important problems in the world. It is largely a bureaucracy that writes resolutions, discusses them in great detail and in great detail, but the most important actors do not take them into account at all. The ideal of the third part of the book, the book The Rainbow Behind the Soul, is questionable from this point of view. The ideal of every diplomat should be what Ali Rašid advises in the poem of Anton Aškerc[103], to "pour good deeds into the cup of immortality every day, deeds of glory for his countrymen". This

[103] Famous Slovene poet from the period of realism, end of the 19th century.

is certainly not bureaucratic activity in the United Nations palace. The United Nations may have been important in a diplomatic sense (we are not discussing the humanitarian one here) at the time of the first publication of the book The Rainbow Behind the Soul. Today, when even the members of the Security Council do not follow the content of the resolutions adopted in this organization, these are very different times as far as this organization is concerned.

However, the book is definitely worth all the attention and we can recommend it not only to a narrow circle of experts in the field of diplomacy, but to many others. I also recommend the second book in the trilogy The Lady in White. This one focuses more on the life issues of the diplomat himself and is an important contribution to the collection of Slovenian works related to diplomacy.

Here, again, as I have done several times before, I urge the author to complete the trilogy. Time is passing, the world is changing rapidly, diplomacy as a science and practice is acquiring new methods and new dimensions, and therefore it would not be good for more than twenty years to elapse between the publication of the first and third books. Unfortunately, the excessive time gap between the first and last books in the current period of significant changes on the international scene affects the coherence of the trilogy. ▪

Sabina Lange[104]

Milan Jazbec (Ed.): **A Day in Diplomacy:** ***The Rainbow Beyond the Soul***

A collection of essays and accompanying words that interpret Jazbeč's novel *The Rainbow Beyond the Soul*, first published in 2006 (Miš Publishing) and representing the third part of the present book, through various elements of diplomacy and attitudes towards it, and personal experiences in various settings, is – along with the novel itself – an innovative, professional, insightful and above all, an instructive and useful guide for younger and not-so-young diplomats on their path.

For those who are fascinated by diplomacy as a profession from the outside, the book provides invaluable insight into the complexity of diplomacy, its demands (and sacrifices) on the personal level of diplomats, and a new perspective in understanding the resolution of both the most high-profile international conflicts and everyday situations when opposing and seemingly irreconcilable interests collide. The authors of the essays are academics in diplomacy-related fields, writers, translators, politicians and diplomats, who in the book connect Jazbeč's novel with their profession and experiences, thus creating a mosaic of knowledge about diplomacy and advice for diplomats.

Diplomacy as a profession, in order to succeed, must operate in the background, beyond the spotlight. It operates slowly, incrementally, behind closed doors. At the same time, it depends on understanding the world behind those doors and knowing the people inside them. In

[104] Dr. Sabina Lange, Associate Professor of International Relations, Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Ljubljana.

today's world, in which television programs and social networks bring us closer to the otherwise inaccessible aspects of the lives of exceptional athletes or Instagram influencers, the mystery of diplomacy reinforces its remoteness and misunderstanding of the functioning of diplomacy, and encourages stereotypes about the elitism and almost decadent life of diplomats. *A Day in Diplomacy* reveals to us the complex and intimate world of diplomacy in a professional way. It explains the processes in diplomacy, elaborates on the necessary skills and knowledge and attitude towards the profession, and illuminates the personal dilemmas of a diplomat.

The inspiration for the essays and the collection of accompanying words is Jazbeč's book *The Rainbow Beyond the Soul*, which represents the third part of the present book. *The Rainbow Beyond the Soul* is a novel about a diplomat, who is also a writer, in New York, which interweaves the current diplomatic developments at the center of international politics – the protagonist represents a non-permanent member of the Security Council – with the diplomat's reflection on his professional journey through several world capitals and his most important personal relationships, and who finds himself in an extraordinary life situation when he is awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature. This professional duality of diplomat and writer opens up the possibility for the author of the novel to combine the world of diplomacy with the lyrical world of fiction.

The authors of the essays in this book contextualize, analyze, and interpret individual aspects and sections of the novel. To highlight just two essays.

Ana Stefanovska elaborates on the relationship between a diplomat and the host country or its capital in contrast to the relationship between a diplomat and his home. The necessary professional distance and a possible sense of personal alienation strengthen the diplomat's bond with his home, which also changes in the diplomat's absence. An expert view of the spatial aspect of diplomacy, where the diplomat's inner world also represents an aspect of space, provides the reader (diplomat or not) with

a reflection on the specifics of the perception of space in diplomacy. The diplomat, in turn, offers some tools for managing these relationships in the need for impartial analysis as part of the tasks of diplomacy.

Natalija Shikova explains elements from the novel in relation to diplomatic skills, processes, and rules. She contextualizes the novel's sections within the framework of international law, negotiation processes, and the principles, rules, and diplomatic protocol that enable these processes. At the same time, it points out the limitations and personal choices that affect diplomats, especially the monologue about the attitude towards family life and the dilemma of a partnership highlighted in the novel, which are well known to experienced diplomats, while *The Rainbow Beyond the Soul* and the essay by Natalia Shikova direct young diplomats on the path of reflection and thus readiness for the need for personal decisions and also personal sacrifices.

The forewords to the various editions of the novel and the speeches at its promotion connect the universality of the diplomatic profession, the inner world of a diplomat and the specific attitude towards the world, diplomacy and literature in the linguistic space for which the forewords are intended. When the former Turkish ambassador to Slovenia Melek Sina Baydur, in her foreword to the Turkish edition of the novel, highlights a section from the book that speaks of the need for modesty on the part of a diplomat, this must be read in the context of the Turkish (diplomatic) understanding of the institution of diplomacy. In addition, the forewords to individual editions and the speeches at its promotion are also a demonstration of Ambassador Jazbec's diplomatic successes and a demonstration of Slovenian cultural diplomacy.

In their essays, experienced diplomats open the door to the reader into their perception of the protagonist's dilemmas and their relationship with the author of the book, thereby strengthening the aspect of mutual relations between diplomats of one country, also strongly present in the novel and too often vulgarized in the media. In her contribution, Slovenian Ambassador Jadranka Šturm Kocjan concisely, yet with the

feeling of an experienced professional, exposes the intimate dilemmas of the protagonist of *The Rainbow Beyond the Soul* from the depths of her soul and presents them as a mirror to young diplomats.

A Day in Diplomacy: The Rainbow Beyond the Soul will be a welcome evening read for young diplomats before they leave for their first posting. It will also be a good companion for diplomats at any point in their careers, especially in those moments when, after the glitter of receptions abroad or endless media browsing and countless boring conversations from which not a single thought worth reporting home emerges, they return to the (impersonal and silent) diplomatic home with the knowledge that tomorrow will be the same. And the next few decades, too. ▪

About the Editor

Prof. Dr. Milan Jazbec is an ambassador and full professor of diplomacy, a writer and poet, and a member of the first generation of Slovenian diplomats. He is employed at the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs of the Republic of Slovenia. He was the sixth Slovenian ambassador to North Macedonia (2016–2020) and the fourth Slovenian ambassador to Turkey (2010–2015), non-residentially accredited to Azerbaijan, Iraq, Iran, Lebanon and Syria, and State Secretary at the Ministry of Defense (2000–2004).

In the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, he headed the Department for European States (2015–2016), the Policy Planning and Research Department (2000 and 2006–2010), and the Consular Department (1996). In 1996–2000, he was Minister Plenipotentiary at the Embassy in Stockholm (diplomatic coverage of Sweden, Denmark, Norway, Finland, Iceland, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, the first year as chargé d'affaires). In total, he served in 21 countries. He is unique in Slovenian diplomacy due to his combination of experience in diplomacy, economics, journalism and politics, as well as literature and academia.

He has been in the diplomatic service for almost four decades; he previously worked in business, journalism and politics. In October 1987, he left the economy to work in Belgrade at the Federal Secretariat for Foreign Affairs, where he graduated from the Diplomatic Academy. In June 1991, he was posted to Klagenfurt, Austria, where he was the last Yugoslav consul, and after Slovenia's international recognition in January 1992 until autumn 1995, also the first Slovenian consul.

He combines his diplomatic career with his academic one. He received his doctorate from the University of Klagenfurt (2000), and in 2015 he

was habilitated to the title of full professor of diplomacy at the University of Ljubljana. Since autumn 2005, he has been teaching diplomacy at the Faculty of Government and European Studies and, since its establishment, at the Faculty of Slovenian and International Studies, both at the New University. From 2004 to 2011, he also lectured at the Faculty of Social Sciences.

He graduated in journalism in 1981 and in defense studies in 1983, both at the then Faculty of Sociology, Political Science and Journalism of the University of Ljubljana. He has lectured at the Vienna Diplomatic Academy, Columbia New York, City University New York and the Faculties of Political Science in Sarajevo and Zagreb, among others. He was a visiting professor at Bilkent, METU and Ankara Universities in Turkey as well as at the South East European University in Tetovo and at the International Balkan University and the University American College Skopje (North Macedonia). In addition to diplomacy as an activity, organization and profession, he is also a pioneer in diplomacy and literature and is developing the sociology of diplomacy.

He has published close to 100 books (author, co-author, editor, co-editor, translations and reprints) and is the author of more than 150 scientific and professional articles on diplomacy, security and defense, all in seventeen languages.

He is currently writing several large series of books. He is completing the first Slovenian trilogy on diplomacy, The Lady in White; the first part, The Rainbow Beyond the Soul, was published in 2006 (translated into eight languages), the second part, In a Search of a Lost Soul, was published in 2017 (translated into Macedonian), and he is currently writing the third part. In the collection of short stories about diplomacy titled Diplomatic Chronicles, the first book, Diplomats in New Clothes, was published in 2023, and the second, Triptych to an Unknown Diplomat, was published a year later.

Two collections on diplomacy particularly stand out. In the first, entitled Diplomacy and Slovenehood (in the Slovenian language), he

publishes monographic studies on Slovenian diplomacy. The first book, entitled Slovenian Diplomacy: A Selection of Contributions and Views 1990–2021, was published in 2022. A year later, the second, entitled Diplomat and Cosmopolitan Martin Krpan: I Don't Like to Deal with Nobility, was published, and a year later, the third, entitled Diplomacy in Words, Words in Diplomacy: Rainbow from Beyond the Soul. In the second collection, entitled The Badger School of Diplomacy, he publishes monographic studies on selected topics on diplomacy in English; the first book, entitled Diplomacy and Globalization: Theorizing, Cases and Synergies, was published in 2023. A year later the book Slovenia: How We Made It came out. In 2021, a trilogy of his selected contributions, entitled Selected Scientific Works and Other Contributions of Milan Jazbec (Diplomacy in the Prism; Every Day Is Rewoven; Security, Defense and Slovenia), was published. He has been publishing books at the Cultural Center Maribor Publishing House since 2022.

He has many years of strategic experience in international business from the beginning of his career (Vipap Krško, 1982–1987), which he began as a member of the presidency of the Slovenian youth organization (1981–1982).

He has been actively involved in journalism for more than a decade, working for Radio Brežice, Radio Študent, the magazine Mladina and TV Slovenija, among others. Since 2009, he has been the founding editor-in-chief of the international scientific journal European Perspectives, and is also with the Diplo Foundation in Geneva as a senior lecturer and blog author for many years. His bibliography in the Slovene bibliographical system COBISS includes close to 800 entries; he has been mentor to ten doctoral candidates and more than 50 master's candidates.

He did his military service in the Macedonian city of Štip (1981–1982), where he is now an honorary citizen as the former Slovenian ambassador to North Macedonia.

For his work, he received the Austrian state decoration, the Grand Golden Decoration of Honor with Star for Merit to the Republic of Austria

(2005) and the Silver Award of the Slovenian Armed Forces (2013). In June 2019, he received the honorary Racin Award in Veles, North Macedonia, and in July of the same year in Sarajevo, the Best Ambassador in Southeast Europe Award, and in the summer of 1995, the honorary coin of the city of Klagenfurt.

He has been a member of the Slovenian PEN since 2017. He is also a member of the Slovenian Society for International Relations, the Euro-Atlantic Council of Slovenia, the Slovenian Emigrants' Association, and since August 2020, the Vice President of the International Center for Emotional Intelligence based in Ohrid.

He comes from the ancient lowland village of Spodnja Pohanca near Brežice, which was for the first mentioned in writing in 1246. He finished elementary school in Artiče and high school in Brežice. He lives and works in Ljubljana.

I recognize Milan's stories as marked paths in the mountains, which are reliable and safer than pathless or vertical directions of a peak. The author emphasizes a demanding approach to the goal of the story, uses precise, sensitive paths and at the top leaves all the views to the reader, allowing him a free view of the route traveled, while at the same time lovingly offering him a hand so that he does not slip into the abyss of the unknown. In the written stories, we can learn from each other, face life's difficulties decisively and embrace each other at the top when the closeness of the heart is recognized.

Magda Šalamon

Question. Being in the service of diplomacy or diplomacy as a service? No definitions this time, at least academic ones. More like the chicken and the egg and what came before. Nothing. Nothing came before and then everything came. Magma of thoughts like a biblical deluge. Write what you think, you would usually say with such and similar things launched. With a smile, of course. And that would be it, without controversy, no raising of eyebrows, just encouragement. Even when it really went tough and when you can only rely on each other. Work doesn't happen by itself, it has to be done, even in diplomacy.

Božena Forštnarič Boroje

The ideal of every diplomat should be what Ali Rašid advises in the poem of Anton Aškerc, to »pour good deeds into the cup of immortality every day, deeds of glory for his countrymen«. This is certainly not bureaucratic activity in the United Nations palace. The United Nations may have been important in a diplomatic sense (we are not discussing the humanitarian one here) at the time of the first publication of the book The Rainbow Behind the Soul. Today, when even the members of the Security Council do not follow the content of the resolutions adopted in this organization, these are very different times as far as this organization is concerned.

Jožef Kunič

A Day in Diplomacy: The Rainbow Beyond the Soul will be a welcome evening read for young diplomats before they leave for their first posting. It will also be a good companion for diplomats at any point in their careers, especially in those moments when, after the glitter of receptions abroad or endless media browsing and countless boring conversations from which not a single thought worth reporting home emerges, they return to the (impersonal and silent) diplomatic home with the knowledge that tomorrow will be the same. And the next few decades, too.

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