

A Goodbye to Nenad

*Farewells are always difficult. Especially when saying goodbye to someone with whom you have had a strong connection for almost half a century. Therefore, I begin in an unusual way, in a personal tone. My first memory of Nenad goes back to the final year of my studies in Ljubljana when I came across a brown softcover book titled Marxism and Post-structuralism. What a discovery! A new insight into the current development of French philosophy. Masterfully written. Then seven years passed. Alive meeting in Ljubljana. A congress in memory of Locke, where I presented my first serious philosophical paper. And Nenad was already commenting on some of my claims. Then, in the IUC course Philosophy of Science in Dubrovnik, where Nenad introduced me to a circle of important analytical philosophers. The first conference in Zadar followed, opening doors for us to the world of analytical philosophy because Simon Blackburn, then editor of *Mind*, was there. Then Nenad's first arrival and lectures in Maribor (it was forty years ago in April). We organized two major conferences under the title Science and Philosophy, in which analytical philosophers from ex Yugoslavia (Nenad Miščević, Neven Sesardić, Miša Arsenijević, Saša Pavković, Andrej Ule, Matjaž Potrč) played a significant role. The first conference in Rijeka (Faculty of Economics and Nenad Smokrović), where I gave a co-lecture on Nenad's paper. Joint trips to the Wittgenstein Congress in Kirchberg. Congresses in Radgona and Bad Radkersburg. All these events deepened our connection. Then there was the breakup of Yugoslavia. In Maribor, we finally got the opportunity to open a philosophy study program. Nenad received a Slovenian half-year scholarship to contribute as a prominent expert to the development of philosophy and humanities at the University of Maribor. He got to know Maribor and made a decision. On October 1st, 1993, he began regularly teaching in Maribor. Together, we planned the future development of the Department of Philosophy.*

New colleagues arrived—today's professors. Nenad was not only a doctoral mentor to many but also an advisor and friend who, with his insight, erudition, and sound rationality, always found the right way out of puzzling situations in both philosophy and personal life. I must emphasize that the Department of Philosophy, with Nenad's immense help, was recognized on the world map of analytical philosophy by the end of the 1990s. During this time, Nenad also became the founder of philosophical studies at CEU and taught there until CEU moved to Vienna.

Nenad was always a visionary. However, everyday obligations often slipped out of his hands. Fortunately, Dunja (Jutronić) and I were always there to solve the arising problems. A kind of guardian angels, but unfortunately not omnipotent. Once Nenad comforted me when things went wrong: "You know, not everything is in our power. Don't worry."

I will conclude this moment with the words of two poets we both admired and, as Nenad described: "Tin Ujević is closer to you, Bojan, since you are a Bohemian at heart, but you don't want to show it, and for me, it's Dane Zajc, because I am a true avant-gardist."

*In foreboding, in longing, distances, distances;
in the heart, in the breath, mountains, mountains.*

There, there to travel,

there, there to grieve;

To no longer know myself,

nor the smoke of pain in the mists.

("Departure" – by Tin Ujević)

There comes a time when there is no more time.

A step stops and cannot move forward.

Time when you stop.

When you yourself are the ice.

Your time.

("Your Time" – by Dane Zajc)

Nenad, I hope you are now, in some other world, enthusiastically debating with the philosophers you have always loved.

To his wife Vera, daughter Heda and her family, I express my sincere condolence in my name and on behalf of my colleagues at the Department of Philosophy, the Dean of the Faculty of Humanities, and the Rector of the University of Maribor.

Read at the memorial in Rijeka, May 16th, 2024

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