

# The Rainbow Beyond the Soul: The Individuality within the World of Diplomacy

Natalija Shikova<sup>1</sup>

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.60073/euper.2023.4.06>

---

## ABSTRACT

This is an analysis of a Milan Jazbec's novel "The Rainbow beyond the Soul". Though presented as a book about diplomacy, it goes beyond, since it explicates a main protagonist's introspective journey. It is organized around three pillars that hold the book's narrative. The first illustrates the character of the main protagonist – the ambassador, in correlation with the main features and aspects of the diplomatic profession. The second explains the international setting – the place where the plot is occurring, presenting as a highly dynamic arena of international organizations and international relations. The last part deals with the essence of the plot, the introspection and intimate journey of a professional faced with the possibility to reach the pick of his literary pursuits. An ambassador and a writer, a potential and ultimately Nobel laureate, are some of the concepts around which different layers of diplomacy, protocol, intimacy, introspection, and acceptance in the form of ultimate satisfaction are placed. Each of them can be traversed independently, yet they converge harmoniously to create a beautiful narrative – a monument of the author's endeavour to balance professional life with the multifaceted aspects of a human personality.

**KEYWORDS:** novel, ambassador, diplomacy, international organizations, introspection

## POVZETEK

Članek predstavlja analizo romana Milana Jazbeka "Mavrica izza duše". Čeprav predstavljen kot knjiga o diplomaciji, gre dlje, saj pojasnjuje introspektivno potovanje glavnega protagonista. Analiza je urejena okoli treh stebrov, ki tvorijo pripoved knjige. Prvi ponazarja lik glavnega protagonista – veleposlanika, v korelaciji z glavnimi značilnostmi in vidiki diplomatskega poklica. Drugi pojasnjuje mednarodno okolje – kraj dogajanja, ki se predstavlja kot zelo dinamično prizorišče mednarodnih organizacij in mednarodnih odnosov. Zadnji obravnava bistvo romanesknega zapleta, introspekcijo ter intimno potovanje profesionalca, ki se sooča z možnostjo velikih dosežkov. Veleposlanik in pisatelj, potencialni in navsezadnje Nobelov nagrajenec so nekateri od pojmov, okoli katerih se umeščajo različne plasti diplomacije, protokola, intime, introspekcije in sprejemanja v obliki ultimativnega zadovoljstva. Vsako od plasti je mogoče prehoditi neodvisno, vendar se harmonično združujejo v čudovito pripoved – spomenik avtorjevega prizadevanja za uravnoteženje poklicnega življenja z večplastnimi vidiki človeške osebnosti.

**KLJUČNE BESEDE:** roman, veleposlanik, diplomacija, mednarodne organizacije, introspekcija

---

<sup>1</sup> ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Dr. Natalija Shikova, Associate Professor at the Faculty of Law, International Balkan University, Skopje, The Republic of North Macedonia, n.shikova@ibu.edu.mk; natalijashikova5@gmail.com

## INTRODUCTION

### *ABOUT THE NOVEL*

The novel “The Rainbow beyond the Soul” is an author’s literate work, distinct from its professional writings related to the diplomacy, although the diplomacy is still one of the central subjects within. Placed in the diplomatic and international setting, the novel speaks about the inner world of the main protagonist who is an ambassador, a writer, and a potential Nobel laureate. The novel introduces the ambassador’s deepest personality, his hopes, dreams and expectations, as in his late professional career he faced the possibly to win the highest literate prize.

In a frontline observation, the novel can be read as an explication of the lives of diplomats, their elevated social status and the unique work environment. The diplomatic job is described as respectful one, but in the same time dutiful and demanding, as the person performing it is under constant pressure to adapt and adjust him to a foreign setting and environment defined by the rigorous diplomatic protocol. To sustain that, except the knowledge, the person needs to have various skills, high level of culture, as well as ability to press down his deepest emotions and fully serve to the diplomatic purpose. In its profound leers, and in its essence, the novel action it is a deep emotional ride through protagonists’ live, his childhood, youth years, seniority. In that complexity, the novel on a sophisticated and unpretentious way, presents the dynamic interplay between personal engagements and satisfactions, as well as the need for self-understanding and inner liberation. The plot of the novel is not presented in a linear storytelling. However, the style of the novel is unique and sophisticated, moving beyond traditional literary forms. That is perhaps necessary because its intention is to present the rainbow of emotions that a human soul comprises.

From that point, the novel can be read as travel diary and a personal mind game, through the storm of events and emotions, past and present, happening in different places that are resulting in a multi-coloured road of rainbow that at the end the main protagonist peacefully passes. The compilation between the diplomacy and the literature existent in a novel is not an incident, and that is not a sole author’s attempt towards those endeavours. Being a career diplomat for long years, the author

Milan Jazbec has a professional and experienced eye for observation, grounded on an extensive knowledge of diplomacy, as well as creative pen that exceeds his efforts in attempts to present the diplomacy through the literature (Shikova, 2023). That makes this novel a gold mine in which everyone can take and process the most of it to enrich one's own professional and emotional experiences.

## **THE PROTAGONIST**

### ***THE DIPLOMAT, THE AMBASSADOR, THE PROFESSIONAL***

The main protagonist of the novel is an experienced diplomat who is performing a post of an ambassador. The diplomatic profession and its distinctiveness are central of a novel that determines the protagonist's behaviours. But what composes a life of a diplomat? In theory the term "diplomacy" comes from the Greek word "*diploma*" - a document that the state officials were caring during their traveling abroad (Kurbalija, 2021). By the definition diplomacy is as an activity of the state in the international scene and in the international relationships in which the authorized organs of the states are defending the interest of the state and its citizens (Collins, Packer, 2006). Ambassadors are persons appointed by a country to represent and promote its interests in another country. Ambassadors (as the diplomatic missions in general) are representing the sending state in the state where they are accredited (receiving state). He/she is the one that protects the interests of its own state and its citizens, negotiating with the government where it is accredited in order to overcome dispute questions, informs the own state about the development and the events in the state where it is accredited, develops friendly relationship among the states, as well as the scientific, economic and cultural ones. The novel reveals the complexity of the diplomatic profession and puts these features of diplomacy in the centre of the novel's fiction.

Speaking about the main protagonist duties, the novel presents the daily work of the ambassador through the activities that he performs:

"He flipped through the memos for today's session. An extensive heap of material. He had no idea when he would be able to read them. Very detailed and very useful, when you first encounter a given issue, but later on often superfluous. While it is true that one cannot remember everything and pull any piece of information at any time from one's

memory, the line of work was such that you had to keep track of the progress and development of situations and absorb all kinds of new information and that on a day-to-day basis” (Jazbec, 2019, p.34).

Ambassadors are high-ranking diplomatic representatives who serve as official representatives of one country to another. They play a crucial role in facilitating communication, negotiation, and cooperation between nations. Through an ambassador’s monolog present in a novel, it can be understood all the skills that the person needs to have so he/she can successfully fulfill its duties. To manage those complex activities, an ambassador as a professional diplomat should possess in-depth knowledge, qualifications to form well-grounded judgment, but certainly an intuition to help in the situation when the link of the communication with own government, due to various reasons is missing. The novel illustrates in detail the complexity of the occupation and necessary features that one needs to have, to perform it successfully:

“Just like his professor at university, years ago, used to tell him: work in the United Nations, a classical multilateral diplomacy, is something special. You must have a lot of general knowledge and additionally you must have a particular sense for detail. Yet both will not help much if you are not capable of recognizing changes immediately and put them instantly into the right framework. Namely, to listen, to hear, to understand, and to use. Your advantage lies in how fast you understand that and use it against other participants in the discussion, by joining in the discussion and forming decisions concerning the agenda. And if you additionally manage to see and comprehend the rules of the game in all the commotion, then you are already far ahead. You see and understand, and even manage to predict from time to time. That is very important, as instructions sometimes arrive late, sometimes are not accurate enough, and sometimes do not arrive at all. The desk officer forgot about it, or did not manage to get the opinion of the minister or not even of the deputy minister, or the minister has not had a chance to consult the prime minister yet, in any case your session is proceeding and you depend only on yourself” (Jazbec, 2019, pp.34-35).

The ambassador needs to have a political insight. It has to be well-versed in international affairs and the political landscape of both its home and host country. This knowledge helps to navigate the diplo-

matic challenges and contribute to policy discussions. The author, Milan Jazbec, through its protagonist, illustrate this:

“You cannot always be searching through extensive material – or your memory – and find comparisons, some checkpoints, maybe a similar decision or even a resolution. You cannot have everything in your head, either. And often you do not have to. That is why it is important to pay attention to detail, and understand. Wholly and quickly. Despite the slow progress of all processes involved, which are sometimes so slow they do not seem to be moving at all. Yet they do, because there is a constant pile-up of unofficial conversation, position realignment, closed-circle talks and behind-the-scenes negotiations. Paying close attention, it occurs to him that the majority of his – and their – time is spent behind closed doors, at informal counselling. A true stock-market of information, a true diplomatic exchange. If you know, you are useful and wanted, and if you do not, you must find out, you must be taught” (Jazbec, 2019,p.35).

Ambassador need to have leadership skills and sense for detail. Ambassador leads diplomatic missions and teams, and those skills are necessary to manage personnel, to delegate tasks, and ensure that everything is functioning effectively and smooth. The novel protagonist explains that:

“If he had not been so tired, he would have smiled. However, he remained an immovable mask. Actually, that is the charm, he said to himself, that work at the top of world diplomacy brings. On the one side, it is removed from reality, despite full and immediate reflections, while on the other side it requires constant attentiveness, constant agreeing and careful coordination. If you want to be successful, you must be in the midst of the action all the time, you must be present and active with suggestions, thoughts, and everything must work like well-oiled Swiss clockwork” (Jazbec, 2019,p.37).

Ambassadors need to be skilled diplomats, adept at maintaining positive and constructive relations between their home country and the host country. As other diplomats, they must navigate complex political landscapes, different political and professional figures, put aside their ego, be fully in their function, devote to their job fully and do their best to promote mutual understanding. The character of the General Secretary, in the eye of the protagonist is a skilful professional that possess

everything that leader in a multilateral diplomacy needs to have. The protagonist perceives him as an excellent role model of a diplomat, in a full sense of its meaning:

“In August, when he will be presiding over the Security Council, his seat will be precisely in the middle, and the Secretary General, when joining the sessions, will have his seat on his right. It will be the first time that they will be sitting side by side because of business and protocol. This, due to the difference in their function, is something that can happen only rarely. He liked that the Secretary was reserved, but not introverted, humble and not divorced from reality. The latter is a common feature in these circles: some bring it with themselves, both rookies and experienced, it is just adverse selection, while others eagerly adopt the characteristic while working here. Yet humbleness is not a sign of weakness; on the contrary, it is a sign of high spirituality, intellectual strength and potential that shows itself when it is needed. One cannot throw that around when it is simply not necessary. But of course, the Secretary will not join every session. Every once in a while, you need some rest, and anyhow, it is not required that he be there all the time” (Jazbec, 2019, pp.30-31).

Among other skills, maybe the most important skills that the ambassador needs to have are the communication skills. A good diplomat is an excellent communicator (Jönsson, Hall, 2005). Therefore, an effective communication in the ambassador work is a paramount. Ambassadors should be articulate, persuasive, and culturally sensitive. They must convey their government's policies clearly and represent their nation in a positive light. The communication in diplomacy goes beyond verbal language. Therefore, communication takes place through words, but also their absence. Nonverbal communication, such as body language, gestures, facial expressions, and even silence, can play a critical role in diplomatic interactions.

In the absence of explicit verbal communication, individuals engaged in diplomacy can still convey messages through their actions, reactions, or thoughtful silences. Silence, can be a powerful communication tool, that can enable reflection, emphasis, or can signal the need for careful consideration (Lazzarini, 2015). The effectiveness of diplomatic communication often depends on the ability to understand and navigate both the spoken and non-spoken aspects of interaction. This two-

fold understanding of communication highlights the complexities and shades that are key element of any diplomatic effort:

“Occasionally, an important message must be delivered by the highest authority and created pressure by the presence of this authority, to help things move along, but sometimes, it is precisely the absence that can create the atmosphere that allows things to move along” (Jazbec, 2019, p.31), observes the novel’s protagonist.

In the context of diplomacy, the ambassador’s work lies the significance of subtleties, nuances, and variations that are paramount in diplomatic efforts. The author uses the term “shades” suggests the different degrees, tones, or aspects that play a crucial role in navigating the diplomatic scenarios. Diplomacy, according to the author/protagonist, relies on the ability to perceive and understand these subtle variations to effectively engage in negotiations and decision-making.

“Shades again, he said to himself; they must always be on your mind and up your sleeve. Diplomacy exists in shades and in the detection and selection thereof, in recognizing and sorting them out. Its power and purpose lie in shades, it would be impossible without them” (Jazbec, 2019, p.31).

The ambassadors can come from various backgrounds and professions, although most of them are professional diplomats. The novel’s main protagonist is an ambassador, but as well the well-known novelist. Although there are historical and even up to day examples of the writers who have also served as ambassadors, such as for example Alexandre Dumas (1802–1870); W. E. B. Du Bois (1868–1963); Jean-Paul Sartre (1905–1980); Ivo Andric (1892–1975); Mario Vargas Llosa, John Updike, etc. this is not a widespread practice, and such cases are usually unique. However, it is even more unique if an individual is both a career ambassador and a novelist, as it is novel’s main protagonist. Still, it is not without reason. Certainly, the ambassador needs to have a cultural sensitivity. The ambassador works in diverse environment, where understanding and respecting the cultural nuances of the host country is essential.

Cultural sensitivity helps in building trust and respect among local officials and communities. The international training lays the foundation for successful diplomatic interactions, and it is a basis on which

diplomats can develop their intercultural skills. Cultural sensitivity is a highway that leads to diplomatic success, or in other words it can make, or sometimes break, any international career (Bolewski, 2008). Therefore, except being appointed by the president of the state or the governments to represent their countries in foreign nations, to deal with diplomatic matters and to promoting national interests, the ambassador is as well promoting its national culture. There may lie the set of skills that both the ambassador and novelist should possess and where they overlap in their performances. The role of ambassador requires deep understanding of international relations, politics, but as well effective language and communication skills.

The main protagonist effectively and successfully combines the ambassador profession endeavours with his writing powers. And from there, the plot starts to develop. From the protagonist well established professional diplomatic position, to the highest literary pursuits that is about to reach. The complexity of the novel is built upon this interplay between these two roles, two expectations and in some moments even two souls, that on the first sight cannot be compound together. The deepness of the novel lays in constant juxtaposition, towards finding a way to a full synergy and acceptance, that novel protagonists finally manage to reach it at the very end of the novel.

## **THE SETTING**

### ***DIPLOMACY AND INTERNATIONAL LAW***

The novel “The Rainbow beyond the Soul” is set in an international context, mainly within multilateral organizations. The narrative explores the dynamics of the international society, in which the states, international governmental organizations, international non-governmental organizations, and entities within the United Nations play the most important role. The novel sets a scene by presenting the ways the international society functions. It is a dynamic place of a community of interacting and interdependent actors that are operating on the global stage:

“It was a large sitting arrangement, as all fifteen delegations gathered around the table with ease: five permanent members and ten non-permanent ones, from which five were replaced one year and the other five in the following. This brought additional dynamics into an already



difficult balance of relations between delegations, their heads, diplomatic staff, Secretariat, of course the Secretary General and his closest aides, special guests, representatives, and others who always came to the sessions to present their reports; it seemed that all of it was a large, uninterrupted river. *Panta rhei*, commented his inner voice,” (Jazbec, 2019, p.31).

This lively setting is the place where the diplomats operate and where in fact the international law is created. In this process, while various actors play crucial roles, the states remain the primary ones, being legal equals – i.e. caring equal rights. It is a place where international law is born and in a sub context in the novel, we can observe the process of international law creation and its implementation. This demonstration is important since it puts focus on the international law and its coexistence with the diplomacy. International law is a hallmark of the international community, since the law serves as a cornerstone in any political community, offering structure and stability. The societies, regardless of size or external power, establish a framework of principles to guide their functions (Shaw, 2008). International public law, despite its name, predominantly governs relations among states, yet it extends to relationships between international organizations and states (Alland, 2000).

The overarching goal of international law is to establish and maintain order and stability in the global community, often preserving the existing state of affairs. The international legal system operates horizontally, with states and other international actors interacting on an equal footing. Unlike national law systems, there is no vertical sovereign power that extends from top to bottom. This distinction is crucial for understanding the potency of international law, as its rules and principles aim to ensure a stable, orderly, and predictable functioning of the international society (Lowe, 2015). The rules of international law serve as safeguards against chaos, providing a framework to prevent disorder in the global community. The reflections of the international law in the diplomatic world, the uniqueness of international setting and its distinct characteristics, which determine its operational modes, is illustratively presented by the novel’s main protagonist:

“Almost immediately after, the word passed to the colleague ambassador on the opposite side, representative of a permanent member, who gave a hard look and emphasized that now, demands simply must be

made. There were already more than too many breaches, nothing else but demands will do. The demand must be clear, it echoed harshly across the hall. And the pale lady on that large painting did not even blink. Naturally, she was used to even harsher discussions in this magical space (Jazbec, 2019, pp.36-37).”

International law has more flexible nature than national law. In some circumstances, the substance of a certain rule may be unclear. However, the same as national law – the law is a human product and as such it is never perfect. International law as well as national law is subject of interpretations (Shaw, 2018). Because of the absence of central or supreme legal power in the international scene, sometimes the interpretations are “misty” or simply many, and as a result sometimes it is difficult for states to have clear and unambiguous statement that express their position. Many examples in the novel realistically and through examples show how the international organizations are operating:

“The description of the methods used in the work of the Security Council of the United Nations is important but I add some points. The debates in the hall at Turtle Bay in the UN Headquarters are for the record. Rarely, if ever, decisions there are the result of open debates. The real work is carried out through discreet channels, mostly in New York but also through agents like diplomats and government emissaries abroad. A case in point to which I was witness in the ante room of the chamber: Then general Ariel Sharon had in an unusual move encircled the Egyptian fifth army in the Sinai desert on the eastern side of the Suez Canal. The many Egyptian soldiers were not only threatened by starvation but imminent extinction because their water supply was effectively blocked by Israeli forces. No public debate could have avoided the disaster. The Soviet ambassador Adam Malik and his United States opposite number, John Scali, former governor of the State of Pennsylvania was locked in a small cubicle with only one interpreter each – of their own choice. When after hours of eye-to-eye deliberations – I would have liked to read John Scali’s take of the event – they came to a super power agreement. It led to the negotiations on practicalities at kilometer stone 101 under the UN auspices guided by the famous general from Finland, Ensio Siilasvuo” (Hagard, 2019, pp.6-7).

Unlike national legal systems, international system lacks the extensive network of formal institutions that can be found in municipal political environments. There is neither dedicated legislative body respon-

sible for international law creation, nor a universal law enforcement institution. Consequently, many international legal rules have evolved from an existing state practice. This customary nature of the lawmaking process can be slow and pose challenge when the international society faces rapid changes (Lowe, 2015). The absence of a central institution systematically impacts the operation of international law and that can result in prolonged disputes that may persist for decades. Our diplomat notices:

“The response to the suggestion of the colleague, who wanted to gain more time and manoeuvring space for soft diplomacy, was immediate and nearly self-evident. As soon as someone offers an additional option, someone else immediately jumps in with a sharp suggestion. What a game of nerves and playing with possibilities. The exact formula for understanding diplomacy in its most noble meaning. If you give in too soon, you are weak, and if you give in at the right time, you are wise. You gain acknowledgement and your reputation gains as well. It is a powerful oscillation, that never drops flat, and many behind-the-scene informal counselling and coordination is needed to bring various positions closer together thus enabling a useful decision, a good resolution” (Jazbec, 2019, p.37).

While this slow decision-making process in the international arena may be perceived as a disadvantage, it is inherent to the international system. States represented by their ambassadors and high officials, are pivotal actors in international forums, driven by their individual interests that are deemed crucial for their existence. Their primary concern is safeguarding these interests. When a state perceives that certain action impinge its vital interests, or affects them beyond what is acceptable (from state’s perspective), it acts with all possible means to prevent those events. The novel illustratively explains that:

“The voice of the representative of a permanent member reached into his thoughts, announcing his firm disagreement with the proposed resolution. He is not thinking about a veto, is he? His thoughts over-sounded him, no, they actually silenced him and pushed him back to the very edge of listening” (Jazbec, 2019, p.35).

In the international society (as it is set), the perfect obedience to international law cannot be expected. The likelihood of violating it is significantly greater in comparison to national law. The interplay between

law and politics can be seen as well as a permanent conflict of norms, hard and soft powers. The novel plot is set in the international arena, presenting the atmosphere and the environment where the leading figures are major for setting the main scene. They have special importance in development of the international relations and international law, and the author, through its main protagonist acknowledges this:

“Probably that was one of the reasons why he and the Secretary General were so self-evidently drawn to one another, to a certain extent even attached to one another. The mandate of both was running out, he was thinking of retirement and his friend, already in his second mandate, likewise. Thinking of him he regretted that one must end the run with two mandates. In his opinion the current Secretary General was something special: he had a peculiar sensuous power, with which he had a positive, calming effect and things seemed to work themselves out; under his leadership, things were moving along at a pace they had hardly ever before” (Jazbec, 2019, p.47).

Therefore, although the international law and its potentials is not a central theme of the novel, the novel illustrates the complexity of the world in which the international norms are operating. The novel explains tendencies to globally maintain the international order, the efforts of the international organizations to prevent disorder, and their attempts to provide forum and arena to articulate state positions and maintain meaningful state interactions. As the story’s protagonist navigates through large, intricate setting of the diplomatic relations, at the same time he navigates through its deepest emotions. Through that journey, and as supportive figures in the novel (on the professional level), are protagonists’ fellow diplomats, other international representatives, some of them closer or more distant than other. Some of those figures are episodic, but others are significant and serve as a mirror for reflection and comparison, as a professional ideal, such is for example the unique figure of the Secretary General, and his special qualities through which he influences the global scene in which this novel is happening.

## **THE PLOT**

### ***PROTOCOL, INTIMACY, RETROSPECTION***

Performing traditional diplomatic activities requires extreme focus, devotion and persistent energy. Perhaps writing, it’s not a common or

necessary qualification for the role? Still, it is maintaining permanent communication with the country officials and other subjects in the international scene. It makes this qualification extremely important. But if there is ever a creativity in these endeavours? Is there any freedom of mind and spirit that a novelist has? That is an extremely questionable, even more is if the person is a writer, and a free spirit, how to balance the demands of diplomatic duties with the creative process of writing fiction?

“And yet, a diplomat. Is it possible to write, to truly write, in such a profession? Skilfully and thoroughly, with excellence which does not lack content, nobly, not just telegraphically, spelling out dry conclusions, analyses of viewpoints and their influence on the formation of politics? Nobody knows for sure. The work is probably very dynamic, tense, exciting, and surely, at times boring. In any case, you spend a lot of time among people, in different situations, constantly in action, and that must already be quite enough encouragement for writing” (Jazbec, 2019, p.20).

This apparently can be challenging, and the novel main protagonist choose to pursue both paths, being adept at managing the time and priorities. But where his primary focus lies? Is it possible to full devote to the diplomatic efforts while still maintaining the focus on writing? The novel gives possible answer to that, pointing towards synergy and discrepancies among the roles. It is an intricate dance of diplomatic life that unfolds against the backdrop of the ambassador’s critical observations. As both an ambassador and a writer, he scrutinizes his surroundings, providing readers with a nuanced view of the environment he navigates. The narrative delves into the sacrifices and renunciations demanded by this dual role, raising the fundamental question of whether the pursuit is genuinely worthwhile? An ongoing theme that threads through the fabric of the story. At an important stage, the ambassador, also a potential Nobel Prize laureate for literature for its novel “The Face Without A Mirror,” suggestively, faces a crossroads that compels him to embark on a profound introspective journey, under the rainbow of its emotions:

“Their talks were no longer what they used to be, and he could not explain it well. It seemed to him that she was different, that she had changed, and that their orbits were slowly, but definitely, moving apart. At the same time, he tried to find something different, some-

thing changed in him that would be the reason. Actually, he could find nothing through the introspective look into his soul, even though he knew well how to be inexorable and hard on himself; you are too hard on yourself, why, do not do this, occasionally he seemingly heard his parents whispering from their grave - the only link to the past, the past which had been so far behind. It is quite possible that he has been biased towards himself. Maybe he also felt, instinctively and from somewhere back, that things have begun getting under his skin, and that explains his reaction, that is why this mask was there. Maybe he was running out of time” (Jazbec, 2019, pp.60-61).

Diplomacy, with its rigid protocols and behavioral expectations, necessitates constant tact and appropriate reactions. Yet, amid the adherence to such norms, the protagonist grapples with the potential loss of individuality, personality, and soul. The diplomatic landscape can change rapidly. Ambassadors need to be adaptable, able to respond to shifting political situations, emergencies, and other unforeseen circumstances. Is the demanding nature of diplomatic protocol compelling individuals to forsake their true selves within the labyrinth of formalities?

“And even if they would be married, the laureate and *l’Ambassadrice*, he thought – was he blasphemous? –, they would not be sitting here together. Protocol does not foresee such a situation. In any case, they would not be enjoying the evening together. What irony, he thought. Almost a curse. Is it really a punishment if you live together with someone, can you really not achieve as much as you would if you lived separately and only met infrequently, while if that was true, then you better stayed alone, in your own skin; was there really no other way? Is that why he was not successful in relationships, well, at making them last? Because it was the only way to be more successful and to stay close to those he liked, well, to those he thought he liked? And so he was alone” (Jazbec, 2019, p.145).

The protagonist, guided by intuition and common sense, negotiates the diplomatic landscape with precision, but the narrative prompts contemplation on whether such adherence erodes the essence of one’s being. Diplomacy often involves lengthy negotiations and complex processes. Ambassadors must possess patience to work through challenges and persist in achieving diplomatic goals. Ambassadors are the face of their country abroad. They must embody the values and image

of their nation, creating a positive and favourable impression among the host country's leaders and citizens. Maintaining the highest ethical standards is crucial for ambassadors. They must uphold the principles of international law and diplomacy, promoting transparency and fairness. The novel pivots on the theme of retrospection, as memories unveil the richness of diplomatic experiences and the protagonist's repressed emotions, overlooked or ignored throughout the years.

“It is not always understandable, neither acceptable. Although life is the same: when the youthful burst of emotions and force of excitement passes, then you see that there is a better way and say. When you realize that, you have achieved firmness and inner peace; you have extended your license and enriched your soul. When there is no one, you depend on, then you are free. And that is when you become alone” (Jazbec, 2019, p.40).

Central to this personal odyssey are the women characters and the protagonist's relationships with them such as longtime friends, lovers, his former spouse, his daughter. Through conversations and introspections, they become instrumental in helping him to unravel the essence of his existence and find answers to his existential queries. Like Dante's Beatrice in its “Divine Comedy” (1308–21), each of them is leading the main protagonist towards the inner labyrinths, although he comprehends that he is the one who need to find a way towards the light.

“But there also had been – and still are – moments when he was completely without worries. It seemed to him that these moments came more and more often as he got older: but he did not know if it really was all so simple; he could not remember how it had been before, in his youth. There must have been such moments, but their traces had faded long ago. Maybe it was better that way. That is why I can, from time to time, not care at all, he heard himself think. I am completely and absolutely responsible for my own actions. I will settle all my accounts myself and only I will be held responsible for everything I have been doing” (Jazbec, 2019, p.24).

Amidst the backdrop of protocolary, retrospection takes center stage, offering a glimpse into the intimate realm the author transforms into a self-expressive narrative—an escape from the prescribed roles on the diplomatic stage. Ambassadors encounter various issues and challenges in their role. Effective problem-solving skills are essential to address

diplomatic crises, trade disputes, and other issues that may arise. But is the main protagonist able to solve its internal conflicts?

“Yet what do I have, here and now, from all of that? Would I not be happier, would I not be less appeased if I had truly herded cows on the abandoned lowlands of my Kozjansko homeland, written books, enjoyed solitude, and communicated with most people only through a secure, impersonal, and reliable screen? Am I perhaps ungrateful, even vain, for asking myself this? Would I be asking myself all of this if I had not achieved any of it, if I had no clue about how these things went? All this travelling, all these flights, conferences, conversations, words, exertions – why? And all the friendships that were fading away – was the fault only mine? – without new ones forming” (Jazbec, 2019, pp.25-26).

The novel’s depth is evident in the continual contrast as the protagonists strive to achieve complete synergy and acceptance, ultimately succeeding to find its inner peace and reach satisfaction.

“Actually, he was really satisfied. When he looked back, he saw a long road that he always tackled with optimism. He had always prepared himself for new challenges, to benefit as much as he could from them and, by preparing, protect himself from destructive influences. If he would have been whining and despairing, if he had pitied himself and had given in to despair – that would not be a smart thing – it would have only made things harder for him, and all the problems would simply multiply. Because of his constantly positive approach, the problems were, of course, not significantly fewer, but he faced them in a different way, he faced them prepared. And consequently, their effects were less destructive and less stressful. His existence was not significantly diminished than it would have been, had he given in to negative impulses. This last revelation is a great gain. And that is why he can be satisfied. Even more, thinking with a pinch of idealism, he finds out that, to a large extent, it had all really been bright, promising, and friendly. It had been all worth it. And, anyhow, hard work is needed to succeed anywhere” (Jazbec, 2019, p.29).

After going through a variety of experiences, the main protagonist, at the end Nobel laureate for literature manages to overcome his doubts. As the narrative unfolds, there comes a moment alongside the much-anticipated conclusion, giving a protagonist a sense of liberation. Accept-



ance on a calm and relaxing way, his own childhood, release from the primary focus of his thoughts – his own child, as every parent need do that when perceiving that she/he is a grown-up person. At the finale of the novel, the protagonist reassures himself that his live journey was pleasant, rich and satisfactory, ultimately displacing himself into realms beyond the rainbow of his soul.

## CONCLUSION

### *JOURNEY, REJUVENATION, SINERGY*

“The Rainbow beyond the Soul” emerges as a novel that transcends its role as a deep and intimate confession. Despite revealing the soul of the diplomat in a protagonist character as an ambassador that has diplomatic, interpersonal, and leadership skills, to excel in his role and effectively represent his country on the international stage, it seamlessly weaves details related to the diplomatic profession. Crafted by Milan Jazbec, an experienced diplomat, the novel serves as a valuable handbook for those navigating in diplomatic waters.

The narrative unfolds on the international stage, offering readers a firsthand insight into the functioning of international society, the strength of international organizations, and the dynamics of decision-making at global forums. The complexity of the novel lies in its intimate and deeply emotional exploration, resembling a tapestry of interconnected layers. Similar like in Stanisław Lem’s science fiction novel “Solaris” (1961), the main protagonist in its own personal spaceship orbiting the world of diplomacy, exploring its deepest sentiments related to its human nature, faced with its consciousness and limitations. An ambassador and a writer, a potential and ultimately Nobel laureate is some of the concepts around which different layers of diplomacy, protocol, intimacy, introspection and acceptance in form of ultimate satisfaction are placed. Each of the layers can be traversed independently, yet they converge harmoniously to create a beautiful narrative – a monument of the author’s endeavor in balancing the professional life with the multifaceted aspects of the human personality.

## REFERENCES

- Alland, D., 2000. *Droit International Public*. Press Universitaires de France.
- Allegri, D., 1947. *The Divine Comedy*. Doubleday & Co; Edition and Printing
- Bolewski, W., 2008. Diplomatic Processes and Cultural Variations: The Relevance of Culture in Diplomacy. In: *The Whitehead Journal of Diplomacy and International Relations*, pp.145-160.
- Collins, C., Packer, J., 2006. *Options and Techniques for Quiet Diplomacy*. Folke Bernadotte Academy, Initiative on Conflict Prevention through Quiet Diplomacy.
- Hagard, J., 2019. Diplomatic Style in a Nordic Manner. In: Jazbec, M., *The Rainbow Beyond the Soul*. Skopje: Magor. pp. 5-7.
- Jazbec, M., 2019. *The Rainbow Beyond the Soul*. Skopje: Magor.
- Jönsson, C., Hall, M., 2005. Communication. In: Jönsson, C., Hall, M. *Essence of Diplomacy. Studies in Diplomacy and International Relations*. Palgrave Macmillan, London. [https://doi.org/10.1057/9780230511040\\_5](https://doi.org/10.1057/9780230511040_5), pp.67-97.
- Kurbalija, J., 2021. Ancient Greek diplomacy: Politics, new tools and negotiation, 'Diplomacy and Technology: A historical journey'. *DiploFoundation*, [pdf] Available at: <https://www.diplomacy.edu/histories/ancient-greek-diplomacy-politics-new-tools-and-negotiation/#:~:text=The%20term%20'diplomacy'%20derived%20from,as%20a%20permit%20to%20travel> [Accessed 10 January 2023].
- Lazzarini, I., 2015. The Forms of Diplomatic Communication, Isabella. In: Lazzarini, I., *Communication and Conflict: Italian Diplomacy in the Early Renaissance, 1350-1520*. Lazzarini. Oxford Academic Press, pp.188-212.
- Lem, S., 2003. *Solaris*. Faber & Faber.
- Lowe, V., 2015. *International Law, a very short introduction*, Oxford University Press
- Shaw, M. N., 2008. *International Law*. Cambridge University Press.
- Shikova, N., 2023. Diplomacy and globalization theorizing cases and synergies, Review. In: Jazbec, M., 2023. *Diplomacy and Globalization*. Maribor and Geneva: Založba Kulturni center and Diplo, pp.371-375.