

APPRECIATION TO PROF. GYÖRGY L. BALÁZS BY HIS MOST RECENT PHD STUDENT

I am deeply honored to be granted the opportunity to give my greetings and appreciation on the 65th years birthday celebration of Prof. Dr-habil Balázs L. György to him, as I was honored the first time when he accepted me to be his PhD student back in 2017. I still remember the first time I met him when he gave me, right after the interview, the 2nd edition of Concrete Technology book written by Neville. Two days later, he asked me if I have finished reading that book of almost 500 pages! I was shocked at the beginning before realizing his strong dedication toward work coupled with the genuine sense of humor. Over the next five years of closely working together, his uplifting and positive encouragement alongside his amusing sense of humor helped me a lot to have a professionally successful and personally happy life during my PhD studies.

Professionally wise, during the period of his supervision, Prof. Balázs taught me all what I need to proceed in my the academic and research field. He used to provide me with valuable lessons in a regular basis, including even how to read a figure, “the good figure is readable and understandable figure in 5 seconds” he said. He taught me how to write technical sentences with the shortest form possible to be simply and understandable for the reader. “Simplicity is the most elegant way of efficiency and effectiveness, and once you will be able to do that, you will enjoy it” he says. Well, I will have to admit now that I enjoy it, and I promise to deliver these precious and beneficial pieces of advice to the next generation. I also remember his endeavors to make Lebanon, Tunisia and UAE joining the *fib* during his remarkably successful Presidency of the International Organization during 2011-2012. One of the lessons I have learned is dedication, when I used to receive his emails at the very early time of the day, as well as I remember him preparing for an opening of the *fib* conference held in Prague, when I saw him reading a full book about Prague to give a short presentation in the city.

Personally wise, my connection with Prof. Balázs goes beyond classes and papers. Our thoughtful discussions about life, personalities, travel, and even politics had a great impression and influence on me. I still remember when I was reading about the group of the Hungarian scientists that immigrated to the USA achieving profound discoveries and achievements, or “The Martians” as they were called in the scientific community. I also still remember when I was trying to write a cover letter for the first time to apply for postdoc positions, when I quoted “my philosophy in life is to love all, trust a few, and do wrong to none”, he suggested to change it, “we don’t put trust issues or any negative words that could affect the reader”. I humorously argued then that this is not my fault, it is Shakespeare’s fault. I also cannot forget his great



Photo taken after the PhD defence of Naser Alimrani (left)

generosity by inviting me many times in fancy restaurants in Budapest, including an exceptional invitation one hour before my final defense when we had a delightful conversation about our families.

One of our remarkable discussions was also when he told me about his wallet that has been lost in Spain one time, when a guy found it and brought it to him with no reward or remuneration. Even when he asked the guy to take some money as a reward for his good deed, the guy refused. He always appreciated “niceness and kindness” the most.

Prof. Balázs’s fundamental rule in life is to have a trust in people. Trusting people is a worth-living virtue, even for the non-worthy people when you trust them you push them and urge their conscious to the good side. I still remember our different perspectives regarding that point. My argument was to put the trust where it belongs, in which trusting all people expecting that they all will react to your trust with a trust as well, is the same situation that a man would expect a lion does not eat him because he is a vegetarian. However, and after more than 6 years of our first meeting, I confess that the genuine kindness will always prevail.

I will always remember when Assoc. Prof. Katalin Kopecskó, his lovely wife, once called me “his academic son”, I could not be prouder then. In the matter fact and interestingly by coincidence, he was born in the same year that my father was born. Finally, these few yet valuable examples show the exceptionally kind, peaceful, and insightful personality that Prof. Balázs has, whom I highly admire and wishing him a long healthy happy life.

Thank you very much indeed.

*Dr. Naser S. Alimrani,
most recent PhD student of Prof. Balázs*