



In memoriam: Associate Professor Dr. Vladimír Novotný, anatomist, morphologist, physical anthropologist, and a leading expert in human osteology, passed away in Brno, on November 30, 2019. He was 80 years old.

Vladimír Novotný's early life, education, as well as professional life was unequivocally linked with Brno City. Born in Brno, on April 7th, 1939, he graduated from the high school at Antonínská Street in 1956 and from then J. E. Purkyně University (now Masaryk University) in 1966 with the degree in general medicine. As a third-year medical students he started working as an assistant at the Department of Anatomy, Faculty of Medicine, where he carried on after graduation as Assistant Professor for the next 20 years. After a short period spent at the National Museum in Prague and Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences, he returned to Brno in order to start his decade-long tenure at the Faculty of Science, Masaryk University, first in the rank of Assistant Professor, and from 1996 as Associate Professor. During the early 1990s, he participated actively in re-establishing the Department of Anthropology, where he became one of the pillars of the newly established study program, who contributed substantially to the curriculum with a variety of courses, notably, human gross anatomy, human osteology, systematic approach to research, or forensic anthropology. For two terms, he also served with distinction as a senator in the Academic Senate of the Faculty of Science. After retiring from the position at the Department of Anthropology in 2004, he went on to join the Department of Environmental Studies, Faculty of Social Studies. Gradually, his contacts with the academic world became sporadic. Towards the end of his life health issues forced him to leave the academia completely.

Undoubtedly, Vladimír Novotný, the researcher, will be remembered for his seminal work on the sexual dimorphism of human pelvis and pelvic bones, where he pioneered and developed the scientific and practical basis for sex diagnosis in human skeletal remains. His life-long interests in pelvic bones produced carefully

crafted publications, which allowed him to achieve prominence among colleagues abroad like only a few of his peers. Nevertheless, his range of interests was remarkably broad, featuring colorful topics from philosophy and methodology of science, to hypnosis and acupuncture, to morphometrics. His proficiency and expertise in anatomy and human osteology led to his involvement with forensic anthropologists, and experts on fingerprinting or forensic facial reconstruction. He was very active in promoting the scientific knowledge. Together with other renowned Czech anthropologists, such as Jan Jelínek or Jan Beneš, he is credited with re-igniting the public interests in anthropology and human evolution.

Yet, the legacy of Vladimír Novotný, the scholar, ought to be celebrated foremost. He trained hundreds

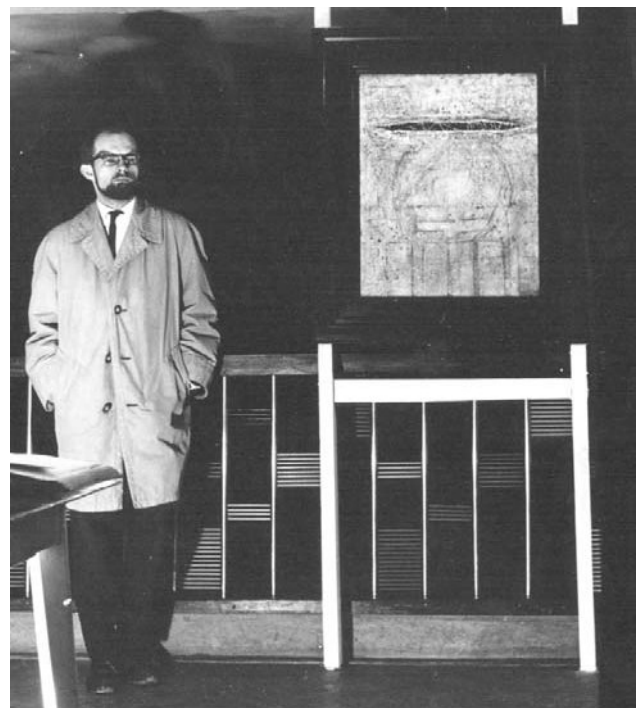


FIGURE 1: Associate Professor Dr. Vladimír Novotný.



FIGURE 2: Vladimír Novotný at the Antonín Trýb Little Gallery in 1965.

of students, of whom a few he hand-picked to mentor. As one of his last students at the Department of Anthropology, I was a witness to what, I assume, can be referred to as the Indian summer of his professional life. Already truly established and accomplished by then, he was still highly enthusiastic about sharing his knowledge and mentoring students – the part of his work in academia he seemed to appreciate the most. A gifted speech writer, and a charismatic speaker, he could turn a lecture, having given by others in a dreary, matter-of-factly manner, into an animated storytelling, which he sparkled with wit and anecdotal references of his many accomplishments.

In addition to his career as an academic, teacher and researcher, he was a well-known persona in the art world. During his times at Masaryk University and later on, he contributed significantly to the education of young artists at the Department of Art Theory and History, Faculty of Fine Art, Brno University of Technology. He was consulted on, or actively participated in numerous artworks. He was given "story by" credits for the piece *Teatrum anatomicum* (1972) from the Goose on a String Theatre repertoire. He

joined the Young Friends of Fine Arts Club at the Brno House of Arts and was a member of the Theatre X, the Brno amateur theatre group. In 1961, he co-founded the Antonín Trýb Little Gallery at the Faculty of Medicine, which had served as the grounds for the alternative fine art and which he had managed until 1969.

While famously a short man, Vladimír Novotný was acknowledged to be a giant in many fields, exerting strong influence on those with whom he came in contact. His legacy will live on through his publications, and the work of his students in academia and art world.

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