



Svanibor Pettan

# In memoriam BRUNO NETTL

(14 March 1930 – 15 January 2020)

With Bruno Nettle's passing on 15 January this year, the world of ethnomusicology lost one of its major figures, a scholar who significantly contributed to its affirmation as an academic field worldwide, and who inspired and kept supporting generations of ethnomusicologists on their way to new heights. His lectures at the University of Ljubljana's Faculty of Arts in 2007 raised lots of interest among the professors and students; at that occasion, he presented the Department of Musicology his collection of abstracts. *Musicological Annual* lost a respected member of its International Advisory Board and the author of the article "What Are the Great Discoveries of Your Field? Informal Comments About the Contributions of Ethnomusicology," published in 2015. I have many fond memories of him, especially of our frequent conversations during my visiting professorship at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign in 2006 and at the Annual Meetings of the Society for Ethnomusicology (SEM) across the United States all until November 2019, when we met for the last time in his Alma Mater, Indiana University in Bloomington. Although physically tired, his mind at the age of 89 was as vivid as always; he participated in a panel featuring past SEM Presidents, while a special session dedicated to him allowed the large gathering of students, colleagues, and friends to celebrate his life and achievements in his presence.

Born in Prague, the capital of Czechoslovakia at that time, Bruno Nettle was raised by parents professionally involved in Western art music. His father was the historical musicologist Paul Nettle and his mother was the pianist Gertrud Hutter Nettle. The Nettles fled to America in 1939, motivated by the Germany's occupation of Czechoslovakia. Bruno completed his doctoral studies in 1953, mostly under the mentorship of George Herzog, and established a remarkable academic career. Besides a permanent teaching position at the University of Illinois since 1964, he received numerous visiting professorships and lectureships, four honorary doctorates, two edited volumes in his honor – *Ethnomusicology and Modern Music History* (1991) and *This Thing Called Music* (2015), Koizumi Fumio Prize and other awards, and election as a fellow to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

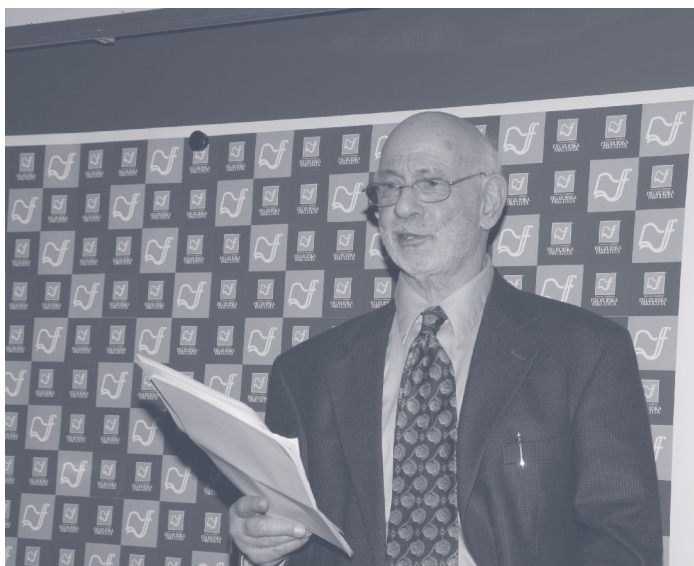
Nettle's crossdisciplinary scholarship provides a broad and multi-layered picture of both selected musics and of ethnomusicology as a discipline. His studies encompass North American Indigenous, folk, and urban musics, Asian art musics in Iran and

India, and European traditional and art music. *Theory and Method in Ethnomusicology* (1964), *The Study of Ethnomusicology* (1983/2005/2015), *Blackfoot Musical Thought* (1989), *Heartland Excursions* (1995), *Encounters in Ethnomusicology* (2002) and *Nettl's Elephant* (2010) count to his best-known books. He is the author of the most intricate entry - on "music" - in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* and contributed to the broadly defined volumes such as *Comparative Musicology and Anthropology of Music* (1991) and *Excursions in World Music* (1992). Over a hundred of his articles were published in journals and edited volumes relevant for ethnomusicology, musicology, anthropology, music education, and other fields. He was actively involved in the activities of several scholarly societies, and was the only scholar who served as General Editor of both the Society for Ethnomusicology's journal *Ethnomusicology* and the International Council for Traditional Music's journal *Yearbook for Traditional Music*.

Bruno Nettel guided many doctoral students from various parts of the globe at the University of Illinois, which became recognized as one of the leading ethnomusicology programs worldwide. Here I will quote two of his well-known former students. In Philip V. Bohlman's words, "It has been the greatest measure of his intellectual breadth and diversity that his former students have not formed a single school, but have established new directions both for ethnomusicology and for modern musical scholarship generally." Marcello Sorce Keller is "quite conscious of one thing: no one, except my parents, ever influenced my life as much and as positively as Bruno Nettel did."

Bruno was curious, approachable and friendly, a person who cherished family, friendships, and collegiality. Dedications of his books to Wanda ("the lady of my life") and other family members and former students speak for themselves. He liked to write humorous verses for family and friends and to include them in his holiday letters each December; a selection of such verses can be found in his witty book *Perverse at Eighty* (2010). While referring to Nettel's 2014 Blacking lecture for the European Seminar in Ethnomusicology gathering in Prague, Zuzana Jurková wrote: "The discipline of ethnomusicology was thus presented as an assemblage of bridges. Now, when reading the text again, I become aware of the fact, that in my professional life, Bruno - thanks to his social, friendly and open nature - was a builder of not only intellectual, but also personal bridges. And I am sure, this is not only my case."

We miss him and thank him for his major contribution to music scholarship!



*Picture 1: Bruno Nettel lecturing at the Faculty of arts in Ljubljana, 2007. / Bruno Nettel predava na Filozofski fakulteti v Ljubljani, 2007. © Photo / Fotograf: Matjaž Rebolj.*



*Picture 2: Bruno Nettel with Svanibor Pettan at the Annual Meeting of the Society for Ethnomusicology, Indiana University in Bloomington, 2019. / Bruno Nettel s Svaniborjem Pettanom na letnem sestanku Etnomuzikološkega društva (SEM) na Univerzi Indiana v Bloomingtonu, 2019.*

S smrtjo Bruna Nettla 15. januarja tega leta je svet etnomuzikologije izgubil enega svojih ključnih predstavnikov, znanstvenika, ki je bistveno prispeval k uveljavitvi etnomuzikologije kot akademske vede, in človeka, ki je navdihoval in spodbujal generacije etnomuzikologov na njihovi poti v raziskovalne višave. Njegova predavanja leta 2007 na Filozofski fakulteti Univerze v Ljubljani so vzbudila veliko zanimanja med profesorji in študenti; tedaj je Oddelku za muzikologijo podaril svojo zbirko akademskih izvlečkov. *Muzikološki zbornik* je izgubil svojega cenjenega člana Mednarodnega uredniškega sveta in avtorja članka »Kaj so velika odkritja tvojega področja? Neformalni komentariji k prispevkom etnomuzikologije,« objavljene leta 2015. Nanj me veže veliko dragih spominov, še zlasti na najine pogoste pogovore, ko sem bil gostujoči profesor na Univerzi Illinois v Urbani-Champaignu leta 2006, in na letne sestanke Etnomuzikološkega društva (SEM) širom ZDA vse do leta 2019, ko sva se srečala zadnjič na njegovi *alma mater* Univerzi Indiana v Bloomingtonu. Kljub fizični utrujenosti je njegov um pri 89-ih bil živahen kot le kdaj; sodeloval je v sklopu sekcije z nekdanjimi predsedniki SEM-a, ter na slavnostnem, odlično obiskanem dogodku, kjer so kolegi, prijatelji in študenti v Nettlovi prisotnosti obujali spomine na življenjske in profesionalne izkušnje, ki jih je slavljenec zaznamoval.

Bruna Nettla, ki se je rodil v Pragi, tedaj glavnem mestu Češkoslovaške, sta vzgajala starša, ki sta se poklicno ukvarjala z zahodno umetnostno glasbo. Njegov oče je bil muzikološki zgodovinar Paul Nettl, njegova mati pa pianistka Gertrud Hutter Nettl. Družina Nettl je leta 1939 zaradi nemške okupacije Češkoslovaške pobegnila v Ameriko. Bruno je doktorski študij zaključil leta 1953, v glavnem pod mentorstvom Georgea Herzoga, in si ustvaril zavidljivo akademsko kariero. Poleg stalnega pedagoškega mesta na Univerzi Illinois vse od leta 1964 je bil pogosto gostujoči profesor in predavatelj, prislужil si je štiri častne doktorate, posvečena sta mu dva odmevna zbornika – *Ethnomusicology and Modern Music History* (1991) in *This Thing Called Music* (2015), prejel je Koizumijevo nagrado za dosežke na področju etnomuzikologije in druga priznanja, postal pa je tudi član Ameriške akademije znanosti in umetnosti.

Nettlovo znanstveno ukvarjanje, ki je združevalo različne discipline, ponuja široko ter večplastno podobo izbranih glasb in etnomuzikologije kot discipline. Polja njegovega ukvarjanja obsegajo staroselsko, ljudsko in urbano glasbo severne Amerike, umetnostne glasbe Azije, prevsem v Iranu in Indiji, ter tradicijsko in umetnostno glasbo na evropskih tleh. *Theory and Method in Ethnomusicology* (1964), *The Study of Ethnomusicology* (1983/2005/2015), *Blackfoot Musical Thought* (1989), *Heartland Excursions* (1995), *Encounters in Ethnomusicology* (2002) in *Nettl's Elephant* (2010) so med avtorjevimi najbolj znanimi knjigami. Nettl je avtor zahtevnega gesla »glasba« v slovarju *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, prispeval pa je tudi za različne odmevne knjige, kot sta *Comparative Musicology and Anthropology of Music* (1991) in *Excursions in World Music* (1992). V revijah in zbornikih, pomembnih za etnomuzikologijo, muzikologijo, antropologijo, glasbeno pedagogiko in druge vede, je bilo izdanih več kot 100 njegovih člankov. Dejavno je sodeloval v znanstvenih združenjih in bil je edini znanstvenik, ki je zasedal položaj urednika tako revije *Ethnomusicology* Etnomuzikološkega društva kot tudi revije *Yearbook for Traditional Music* Mednarodnega združenja za tradicijsko glasbo. Bruno Nettl je bil mentor številnim doktorandom

iz različnih držav, etnomuzikološki študijski program Univerze v Illinoisu pa je postal eden vodilnih v svetovnem merilu. Naj na tem mestu citiram dva izmed njegovih znanih nekdanjih študentov. Philip V. Bohlman: »Morda največji dosežek njegove intelektualne širine in pestrosti je dejstvo, da njegovi nekdanji študenti niso ustvarili ene same šole, temveč so odprli vrata novim smerem tako v etnomuzikologiji kot v sodobni znanosti o glasbi na sploh.« Marcello Sorce Keller: »Dejstvo je, da nihče, razen mojih staršev, ni na moje življenje vplival bolj blagodejno kot Bruno Nettl.«

Bruno je bil radoveden, dostopen in prijazen, nekdo, ki je cenil družino, prijateljstva in kolegialnost. Knjižna posvetila Wandi (»dama mojega življenja«) in drugim družinskim članom ter nekdanjim študentom govorijo zase. Rad je pisal aforizme za družino in prijatelje, vsakega decembra pa jih je dopisal v božične voščilnice; izbor teh humorističnih verzov lahko preberemo v njegovi duhoviti knjigi *Perverse at Eighty* (2010). V oziru na Nettlovo plenarno predavanje v okviru Evropskega etnomuzikološkega seminarja leta 2014 v Pragi je Zuzana Jurková zapisala: »Etnomuzikološko vedo je predstavil kot niz mostov. Zdaj, ko znova berem besedilo, mi postaja jasno, da je bil Bruno v mojem poklicem življenju – zavoljo svojega družabnega, prijaznega in odprtega značaja – graditelj ne samo intelektualnih, temveč tudi osebnih mostov. In prepričana sem, da to ne velja samo zame.«

Pogrešamo ga in se mu zahvaljujemo za njegov izjemni prispevek k znanosti o glasbi!