

Landmarks for Alternative Jazz Identities in the Wake of Totalitarianism

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Abstract

In the beginning jazz was an Afro-American import. In those European countries that were subjected to the trauma of totalitarianism jazz acquired an aureola of martyrdom becoming the symbolism of underground resistance. The appearance of jazz orchestras was considered concealed reaction to oppression through the expression of national identity. Hence jazz lost its originally entertaining function and metamorphosed into a sound metaphor for liberty. By the early 1960s, all over Europe there already existed a conscious generation of jazzmen, able to assert each country's identity under the broad spectre of this cosmopolitan music

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In 2004, Jaques Panisset the indefatigable soul of the Grenoble Festival, had the commendable idea of organising a Colloquium about Jazz and the European Identity on the threshold of the new century. The theme is vast enough to be debated in a series of doctorate theses. In order to be accepted as a decent participant to this encounter, I chose to give just some reference points, not a thorough analysis concerning mainly the role of jazz in that part of Europe where I was born. I do not believe that being a Europocentrist precludes respect and empathy for all continents (after all, they are not too many). Neither do I think that my heartfelt affection for Romania's province of Transylvania, where Providence wanted me to be born, makes me less of a citizen of the world. On balance, I have always perceived jazz as a quite good seismograph for the atmosphere reigning within a certain culture. In the beginning of the 21st century this music is a virtual means of getting familiar with the ineffable spirit of various nations. The process of moving the "boundaries" of the originally Afro-American music farther

to the East has been gaining consistency and visibility starting with the 1960s. It was being revealed, recorded and supported for the first time on a large scale by the *Jazz Forum* magazine edited in Warsaw/Poland. One can never be grateful enough to the Polish intellectual elite for achieving such a truly international aperture. But, of course, the roots of this phenomenon were deeper and – because of the troubled post-WW II context – have remained rather obscure.

First, some geopolitical observations. I regard Europe as a continent stretching – according to De Gaulle’s formula – from the Atlantic Ocean to the Ural Mountains. Unfortunately, as a consequence of WW II, its unity was brutally broken into the so-called “free West” and the “socialist camp” of the East (note the sinister resonance of the term *camp*). In some way or another, Stalinism sealed the destiny of the nations that had emerged after WW I in Central and Oriental Europe. Some of them, like Ukraine, Armenia, Georgia, Azerbaijan, had already been incorporated into the Soviet Union by the early 1920s. The Baltic republics, Romania’s province of Bessarabia, and Eastern Finland shared the same fate in 1940, as a consequence of the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact. East-Germany, Czechoslovakia, Poland, Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria and Albania were also placed under totalitarian regimes, while Tito’s Yugoslavia managed to create its own brand of alternative socialism. Finland and Austria preserved their neutrality, and Greece went through a civil war to maintain its capitalist system.

In general, the two interwar decades were auspicious for the development of arts and culture on the Old Continent. Nevertheless, Europe seemed overwhelmed by some sort of prostrate admiration for the music that was spreading out full swing from across the Atlantic. The Afro-American myth seemingly paralysed the capacity of most European jazz pioneers to think for themselves. Suffice it to compare two discographic anthologies sampling the beginnings of jazz in Sweden and the Soviet Union (the first issued by *Svenskt Visarkiv* on Caprice Records 1979, under the title *Svensk Jazzhistoria*, and the second entitled *Antologiya sovetskogo Djaza / Melodiya*, 1984). Both evince the same tendency to emulate American models in the shape of up-to-date commercial tunes or dances, instrumental line-ups, ways of composing and improvising, etc. There were some local appendages as well, usually not surpassing the courage of using lyrics sung in Swedish or Russian. I’m afraid the situation in Romania was not too different (moreover, poorly documented).

It is amazing to notice that even during Stalin's terror of the 1930s, jazz-related music continued to be played in the "first state of the victorious proletariat", and even got promoted through a most popular art, the cinema. While unique writers or artists like Bulgakov, Meyerhold, Babel, Mandelshtam, et al. were being persecuted or annihilated, the toughly controlled film studios produced grandiose comedies resounding with jazz, such as Grigoriy Alexandrov's *Vessiole rebiata* (1934), *The Circus* (1936), and *Volga-Volga* (1938). Perhaps as a concealed reaction to Soviet imperialism, in some of the Union's republics the appearance of jazz orchestras was considered by the local intelligentsias as an expression of their national identity (e.g. the big band founded by Genrik Vars in the Ukraine, the Armenian State Jazz Orchestra organised by Artemiy Aivazian, or the ensemble led by trumpeter Eddy Rozner in Byelorussia). In his monograph about Vagif Mustafa-Zadeh, hailed as the symbol of emancipated Azerbaijani jazz (*Ishyg* publishing house, Baku/1986), Rauf Farhadov points out: "1939 marked the arrival of jazz on Azerbaijan's professional music scene (one year before Vagif's birth – on the 16th of March 1940). In 1939, Niyazi and Tofik Kuliev founded the State Jazz Orchestra of the Azerbaijani Soviet Socialist Republic. It comprised three trumpets, three trombones, five saxophones, piano, guitar, and drums. Its first programme included – besides jazz classics like *Caravan*, *Stardust*, *St. Louis Blues* – compositions by the ensemble's two founders. One of those pieces proposed a daring experiment: saxophone improvisation on the theme of a well-known Azerbaijani *mugam*." Farhadov concludes that those events marked the birth of Azerbaijani jazz.

Such developments occurred practically in all European countries, but I have chosen this marginal example to prove the overall character of the "jazz contamination". By and large, a coherent jazz development in a certain country would have been anticipated by significant mutations in the aesthetic landscape, usually engendered by the avant-garde insurgencies of the early 20th century. In this respect, the prototype remains Russia. The fulmination of the *Ganelin/Chekasin/Tarasov Trio* in the 1970s entailed a stream of new-jazz-originality emerging from the Soviet Union. But, from a historical perspective, that phenomenon was a rekindling of the avant-garde movements in all fields of art that had taken place in both pre-WW I Russia, and the years following the setting up of the Soviet regime in 1917. Francis Poulenc noticed that "between 1910-1913, all arts were more or less tributary to the *Ballets Russes*, but music was the one to

benefit most from Diaghilev's prophetic impulse." Throughout the first years of the one-party-regime, the renewal and innovation fervour perdured in all arts from choreography to architecture, from poetry (Khlebnikov, Mayakovski, Kruchennych, Blok) to painting (Kandinsky, Chagall), from theatre (Meyerhold) to cinema (Eisenstein), from prose-writing (Bulgakov, Belyi) to music (Prokofiev, Shostakovich). *The First Eccentric Orchestra of the Russian Federated Socialist Republic – Valentin Parnakh's Jazz Band* held its debut concert on October 1st, 1922, in Moscow. In parallel, the experimentalist wave of so-called noise orchestras reached its apogee with the establishment of the *First Experimental Synthetic Chamber Ensemble* by pianist Leonid Varpakhovsky in 1923. Sadly, this unparalleled effervescence was stifled soon after Stalin's gripping of power.

I am not so naive as to believe that art can solve the world's problems. But nobody is entitled to deprive the realm of creation of its right (and obligation) to propose alternatives to the dark side of reality. Even during the most obscurantist periods of dogmatism, conscientious artists went on creating valuable works, feeding hopes. Examples set by prominent literary figures during the Stalinist era – Bulgakov, Ilf & Petrov, Daniil Harms... – spring to mind. Suchlike cultural background explains the continuity of innovative attitudes in Russian music, say, from Stravinsky to Ganelin/Cekasin/Tarasov, despite long decades of harsh political and ideological repression.

Similarly, in Romania an open-minded attitude towards jazz had been forerun by a prolific avant-garde. The "inventor" of *dadaism* – Tristan Tzara, the radical reformer of contemporary sculpture – Constantin Brâncuși, the father of the "absurd theatre" – Eugen Ionescu, the explorer of "the very acme and pitch of desperation" – Emil Cioran, the architecture-cum-poetry wizard Marcel Iancu, and many more, were artistic personalities patently compatible with the freedom inherent in the very notion of jazz. Many Romanian avant-garde manifestoes dating from the last century's first decades may be perceived as anticipating the anarchical aesthetics of *free jazz*.

In the European countries that were subjected to the decade-long trauma of totalitarianism jazz acquired the aureola of martyrdom, the symbolism of underground resistance. It wouldn't be exaggerated to state that the concept itself is loaded with much heavier meaning in our part of the world than in its homeland. To their troubled history of censorship and suspicion, one should also add the traditional inclination of East European people to regard culture, in general, as some sort of life-saving

grace. Actually, the very birth (or rebirth) of these nations depended on their survival through culture. Passing the test of atrocious persecutions, jazz was hailed as an almost providential way of becoming – musically and culturally – free to assert one’s individuality in an epoch of forcibly achieved collectivisation. Such prerequisites explain why this music came to be considered among the very serious art forms in these areas. Realising that their freedom can be at stake any time makes people more sensitive to artistic beauty. Under such pressure, jazz’s originally entertaining function lost its preponderance, and this musical concept metamorphosed into a sound metaphor for liberty. Of course, for the teenagers of the 1960’s, a similar role would be played by the rock revolution amalgamating everything from Beatlemania to Frank Zappa’s acid eclecticism. Yet the magic of jazz, though temporarily eclipsed by different “-isms”, has never disappeared, for the freedom it affords is of a superior kind – a boundless one, transcending the limits of any given combination of circumstances.

The first steps towards giving jazz real prominence in Eastern Europe were undertaken in Poland – with the opening of the Sopot Festival in 1956. One year later, the International Youth Festival held in Moscow became a quite appropriate occasion to be seized by the hundreds of jazz-buffs living in that city. They cunningly eschewed party control (in the wake of Khrushchev’s process of de-Stalinisation, launched in 1956), transforming the officially sanctioned jazz contest into a launcher of real talents proceeding from various countries. The same spirit would be resumed a decade later by Estonia’s “historical” jazz fest held in Tallinn.

Heralds of Emancipation

By the early 1960s, all over Europe there already existed a conscious generation of jazzmen, able to assert each country’s identity under the broad spectre of this cosmopolitan music. There were four personalities who stood out in this respect: Krzysztof Komeda in Poland, Jan Johansson in Sweden, Richard Oschanitzky in Romania and Vagif Mustafa-Zadeh in Azerbaijan. (By including a jazzman from a free country in this quartet, I want to show that precisely such artists were making the Iron Curtain transparent; on the other hand, jazz in democratic states also strove for maintaining and expressing individual and national characteristics). All of them were pianists and composers, and collaborated with filmmakers of that time (Johansson with Ingmar Bergman, Komeda with Polanski...). Unfortunately, the four of them

finished their lives prematurely, about at the same age as George Gershwin.

Through their prophetic visions, dauntless originality and creativity, these “damned souls” contrived decisive transfigurations of the national musical ethos into an expanded jazz idiom. They all resorted to the basics: Komeda revealed the compatibility between Chopin’s legacy – as foundation for a Polish musical consciousness – and the art of post-impressionistic piano improvisation. Johansson proposed his melancholy interpretation of the Swedish traditional song *visa*, in an immortal album entitled *Jazz pa Svenska* (Jazz in Swedish). Oschanitzky sublimated the astounding variety of Romanian folkloric traditions into breathtaking stylistic syntheses – from the ancestral *doina* to free-jazz – performed by his unforgettable *Freetet*. Moreover, he also thought on a grand scale, as proven by his *Double Concerto for Piano, Tenor Saxophone, Symphony Orchestra & Big Band*, recorded in 1969 at the Leipzig Radio studios, with the composer on piano and Dan Mandrila on tenor sax. In retrospect, Oschanitzky also appears as one of the first East-European jazzman with a keen interest in Latin American musical models; not only did he elaborate the *Barlovento Suite* on lyrics by Cuban poet Jorge Guillén, but he also composed a series of bossa novas, and even learned Portuguese in order to comprehend Luso-Brazilian poetry. In his turn, Vagif Mustafa-Zadeh fused the classical autochthonous form of *mugam* with freewheeling pianistics, like some reincarnation of Cecil Taylor diving into seas of Central-Asian modal inflexions.

These four romantic heroes, so to say, may be regarded as the first personalities of international value engendered by/and concomitantly lending legitimacy to the “national jazz schools” in their respective countries. For they were already surrounded by other remarkable musicians. But remember, at that stage of development jazz was being shaped rather by exceptional personalities than by the masses of its practitioners.

Other jazz areas of the Old Continent also had their share of domestic legends. Thus, in 1967 Spanish saxophonist Pedro Iturralde recorded a historical album entitled *Flamenco jazz*, which was to yield a substantial and spectacular movement bearing the same name, at the turn of the century. Another intuition of Iturralde’s was to include young guitar-player Paco de Algeciras into the quintet that recorded the aforementioned LP. Soon, Paco would raise to fame, with a changed surname – DeLucia.

In neighbouring Portugal, fado-queen Amália Rodrigues participated in another pioneering project: the album *Amália & Don Byas/Encontro*, on which the American saxophonist lent some improvisatory flair to the rather stiff structures of the fado. Luis Villas-Boas, Portugal's major jazz promoter, initiated the attempt in 1968.

These events took place while the totalitarian regimes introduced by Salazar in Portugal and Franco in Spain was still alive. Formally, the dictatorships installed at Europe's Western and Eastern ends upheld opposite principles. But essentially they led to the same effects: disregard for human dignity, suffering, unhappiness, censorship... However, the fascistic regimes of Salazar and Franco at least preserved private ownership and let their citizens own a passport, whereas in my homeland the dictatorial clique considered the entire country as its own property, and arbitrarily disposed of its subjects' right of movement. As far as the rights of expression and of being informed were concerned, they fell under state monopoly. The degree of repression varied from one totalitarian country to another.

With fado being officially turned into some national(istic) emblem by Salazar's *Estado Novo* (New State), jazz held a somewhat extravagant /underground position in Portugal, similar to the one which it had been relegated to in Oriental Europe under the shadow of the Big Soviet Brother. Like in Spain, the main sources of information were foreign radio stations and records flown in from abroad. Thus, for years on end, *the Voice of America's* Willis Conover was as much of a hero for jazz worshippers in the extreme West, as he was in the East of our continent. In 1971, still under the old regime, Villas-Boas started the Cascais jazz Festival. The enthusiastic atmosphere, the crowds gathering from all over the country to attend the concerts, the social elation and solidarity brought about by the galas all recall Romania's jazz festivals, organised in spite of Ceaușescu's dictatorship (mainly in Sibiu) between 1969-1989.

Here is a tentative list of some musicians that contributed to the appearance (and in some cases even flourishing) of jazz in countries behind the iron curtain: Lembit Saarsalu, Arvo Pilliroog, Tonu Naissoo, Tiit Paulus, Peep Ojaveri, in Estonia; Dan Mandrilă, Johnny Răducanu, Eugen Gondi, Aura Urziceanu, Ștefan Berindei, Marius Popp, Nicolas Simion, Harry Tavitian, Mircea Tiberian, Corneliu Stroe, Ion Baciui, Anca Parghel, Alin Constantiu, in Romania; Tomasz Stanko, Zbigniew Seifert, Andrzej Trzaskowski, Zbigniew Namyslowski, Tomasz Szukalski, Sławomir Kułpowicz, Janusz Muniak, Krzesimir Debski,

Czeslaw Bartkowski, Wojciech Karolak, in Poland; György Szabados, Aladár Pege, Mihály Dresch, Szakcsi Lakatos, János Gonda, Balázs Berkes, Csaba Deseö, Imre Kőszegi, István Baló, Attila László, in Hungary; Jiri Stivin, Miroslav Vitous, Karel Velebny, Jan Hammer, Milan Svoboda, Rudolf Dasek, Karel Ruzicka, Michal Gera, Emil Viklicky, in Czechoslovakia; Petras Vysniauskas, Vytautas Labutis, Gediminas Laurinavicius, Kestutis Lusas, Vytautas Pilibavicius in Lithuania; Raimonds Raubisko, Ivars Galenieks, Maris Briejkalns, Raimonds Pauls, in Latvia; Milcho Leviev, Simeon Shterev, Vesselin Nikolov, Antony Donchev, Christo Yotsov, Teodosy Spassov, in Bulgaria; Vadim Sakun, Yuri Saulsky, Georgi Garanian, Valeri Ponomarev, Alexei Kuznetsov, Sergey Kuryokhin, Leonid Chijik, Valentina Ponomareva, Alexei Zubov, Viktor Dvoskin, in Russia.

Practically, these local scenes mirrored the music's stylistic diversity, but in each of them there lurked a certain antagonism between the unconditional devotees to American patterns and the promoters of an own approach in jazz, based upon autochthonous traditions and sensibilities. Generally speaking, the battle opposing "the ancients" and "the modernists" was polarised – on a musical plane – between the adherents of mainstream and the more or less radical innovators. A most cogent example in this respect was East Germany, where the leap from Dixieland to inexorable free improvisation left no chance to any middle-of-the-way compromise. And it goes without saying that from that ephemeral country we have not kept memories about its dixie-bands, but about valiant trailblazers the likes of Manfred Schulze, Ernst Ludwig Petrowsky, Conrad Bauer, Ulrich Gumpert, Günter Sommer, Helmut Sachse, Friedhelm Schönfeld, Manfred Hering, Hannes Zerbe, Uwe Kropinski, Johannes Bauer, Heiner Reinhardt, Christoph Winckel, and more.

Some exceptionally gifted European jazzmen preferred to remain affiliated to the "Wynton Marsalis" type of puristic conservatism, rather than search for more personal ways of expression. This makes it hard for listeners to guess that Coltrane-devotees Igor Butman, Garbis Dedeian or Milivoj Markovic, were born respectively, in Russia, Romania and Serbia, although they sound perfectly... American. The same may be said about the Ukrainian a cappella group *Mansound* that strives for vocal perfectionism *à la Take Six*. And if you listen, for instance, to the yearly anthologies issued by the Danish and Finnish Jazz Federations, you will immediately notice the preponderance of young musicians still emulating trans-Atlantic archetypes. If I were supposed to

produce a list of the most imitated jazz-stars worldwide in recent decades, I'd mention first off Keith Jarrett, *Weather Report*, Jan Garbarek, Chick Corea.

The particular conditions in ex-Yugoslavia and Cuba would deserve a separate analysis. At any case, in these two spaces jazz had a more organical relationship to what was happening in its homeland. In Yugoslavia because of the freedom enjoyed by the media, and the chance to witness state-of-the-art performances in a multitude of festivals, concerts, tours etc. In Cuba, simply because of the proximity of the United States, but also because of the true interest manifested by the Dizzy Gillespie and his cohorts in the musical treasures of the largest Caribbean island. No wonder then about Cuba's superb contributions to the development of post-modern jazz. Already in 1978, the group *Irakere* exploded on the international scene, causing sensation at the Newport and Montreux festivals. Its line-up reads like an enumeration of *founding fathers* to nowadays' Cuban jazz effervescence: pianist Jesus Chucho Valdés, reedsmen Paquito D'Rivera, Carlos Averhoff, trumpeters Arturo Sandoval, Jorge Varona, percussionists Enrique Plá, Jorge Alfonso, Oscar Valdés, Armando Cuervo, guitarist Carlos Emilio Morales, bassist Carlos del Puerto. During the 1980s, the Cuban (and world) scene received new blood from pianist Gonzalo Rubalcaba, bassist Jorge Reyes, keyboardists Emiliano Salvador and Hilario Durán, bassist/bassoonist Felipe Cabrera, reedsmen Manuel Valera, Rafael Carrasco, drummer Horacio Hernández, trumpeter Lázaro Cruz, and so on. What all these musicians proved (soon to be followed by the Ry Cooder/Wim Wenders rediscovery of *Buena Vista Social Club*) was that the prejudice of the "American trade mark" – as an exclusive quality guarantee in jazz – had become a thing of the past by the turn of the century. To paraphrase André Malraux, jazz in the 21st century will be a universal musical phenomenon, or it won't exist at all.

Transition

Until the disintegration of the "socialist system" in Europe, jazz had been subjected to approximately the same treatment by the authorities of those countries: it was more or less tolerated, as some sort of an underground safety-valve, nevertheless able to generate conclusive musical values. Now, in the beginning of the 21st century, the situation becomes more differential. I do not refer to talents. They continue to be born in this vast area (as all over the world), and still can benefit from an efficient educational system, which inherited from its "socialist" predecessor a certain concern for the fate of artistically inclined

youngsters. The disjunctions start from the importance assigned to jazz within the cultural policies of East-European states. This can vary from practically nil in the Republic of Moldova, to the powerful state-support enjoyed by the musical-improvisatory genre in Croatia, Slovenia, Hungary, the Baltic republics. Obviously, the governments of these latter countries are aware of the positive-image potential encapsulated by jazz. This may be turned to use in boosting national prestige, indigenous artists, international exchanges, even tourism.

Personally, I was equally impressed by the jazz festivals of Varna or Leipzig, Tomar or Warsaw, Győr or Chisinau, Novi Sad or Sibiu, Verona or Corinthos, Guimaraes or Vienna, to which I had the honour of being invited. The difference was not in their atmosphere – likewise exciting and unforgettable – but in the relationship existing between the organisers and officialdom. For it has become a truism of the post-communist era to state that ideological censorship has been replaced by financial censorship. And it is quite natural, given the economic discrepancies plaguing our continent. Thus, the income of a working adult in Portugal is roughly twenty (20) times bigger than that of a Romanian one practicing the same profession, while prices tend to be levelled according to European Union standards.

Anyhow, one cannot underestimate the value of the retrieved freedom of expression and of movement brought about by the fall of the one-party dictatorship. After 1989 many East-European jazzmen let themselves be mesmerised by the consumer delights of the Occident, just like soccer-players or cohorts of young intellectuals. Such *brain drain* has been affecting the normal development of the budding, already mentioned “national jazz schools”. Yet their further enrichment with upcoming talents went on.

Many of today’s significant personalities in the jazz of the East had already asserted their originality during the reign of repressive regimes in their countries. Such guiding stars who led the way through the confused “transition period” ought to be remembered by any European jazz history: Stanko, Namyslowski and their peers, in Poland; Stivin and Svoboda in Czechia; Tavitian, Stroe, Tiberian in Romania; Szabados, Dresch in Hungary; Stjepko Gut, Mihailo Blam, Milos Krstic in Serbia & Montenegro; Anatoly Vapirov, Teodossy Spassov in Bulgaria; Tarasov and Visnyauskas in Lithuania; Yuri Kuznetsov, Enver Izmailov in Ukraine; Peter Lipa in Slovakia; Tone Jansa in Slovenia; Datevik Hovhannessian in Armenia; Aziza Mustafa-Zadeh in Azerbaijan; Raimonds Raubisko in Latvia; Lembit Saarsalu in Estonia; Anatol

Stefanet in the Republic of Moldova; Zurab Gagnidze, Zaza Mininoshvili in Georgia; Bosko Petrovic in Croatia.

Before the falling apart of the Soviet Union, that country experienced an upsurge in jazz creativity, which found its providential documentarist in London-based producer Leonid Feigin. His albums, edited at the Leo Records label, are an invaluable source of information for the groundbreaking work of such luminaries as Ganelin, Chekasin, Tarasov, Kuryochin, Ponomareva, Vladimir Rezitsky, Arkady Shilkloper, Vyacheslav Guyvoronsky, Vladimir Volkov, Sergey Letov, Alexander Alexandrov, Yuri Parfenov. This self-conscious movement had beneficial effects not only upon the Russian scene. It proposed some alternatives to the *new jazz* phenomenon that had gotten into a rather stagnant phase; it also conveyed refreshing perspectives across new horizons to Occidental audiences and critics (as happened in the case of William Minor's tome *Unzipped Souls – A Jazz Journey Through the Soviet Union*/Temple University Press Philadelphia, 1995); last, but not least, this concentration of forces also exerted fertile influences upon Siberia and Central Asia. No wonder then that remarkable jazz(-related) music(ians) appeared in such unlikely places as Novosibirsk (The *Homo Liber* group), Kazakhstan (the *Bumerang* ensemble), Uzbekistan (Grig Pushen, Semion Mordukhaev), Tuva (Sainkho Namchylak).

The most significant jazz-oeuvres in the post-totalitarian states have been created by artists with an ever stronger awareness of their own cultural/musical roots. Let's start with examples from Portugal and Spain, which got rid of their fascist-tinged regimes, by the mid-1970's. Whereas the grand hope of the bass Saheb Sarbib abandoned his homeland, it was Rao Kyao who "invented Portuguese jazz" (as Jorge Lima Barreto put it). Beginning with his exotic pseudonym (his actual name is Joao Ramos Jorge), and ending with his out of turn musical evolution, Rao Kyao transposes something of the mystery of the Lusitanian soul into the realm of improvised music. His albums *Malpertuis*, *Bambu*, *Goa* glow with cogent saxophone mastery, and summon up other influential musicians, like pianist Antonio Pinho Vargas, bassist Zé Eduardo, or vocalist Fernando Girao. In 1983, Kyao recorded his masterpiece, *Fado Bailado*. Reverently yet decidedly, he did not launch himself into paraphrasing classical fado themes, but chose to "sing" them on tenor saxophone. This introvert vision was in sharp contrast to Don Byas's somewhat impressionistic sax-comments (rather imposed on him by Villas-Boas's good intentions) in the aforementioned *Encounter* with Amalia Rodrigues. Rao Kyao replaced verbal cognition with pure instrumental

emotion, putting his craft to the service of that most Lusitanian of all feelings – *saudade*.

Today's Portuguese jazz scene boasts quite a few high calibre musicians. Besides the already mentioned ones, I should add singer Maria Joao, bassists Carlos Barretto, Carlos Bica, Antonio Ferro, Bernardo Moreira, pianists Joao Paulo Esteves da Silva, Mario Laginha, Bernardo Sasseti, Carlos Azevedo, Miguel Braga, trumpeter Laurent Filipe, guitarists Rui Luis Pereira, Mário Delgado, violonist Carlos Zingaro, reedsman Carlos Martins, Paulo Curado, Mario Santos, José Nogueira, drummers José Salgueiro, Alex Frazao, Bruno Pedroso...

Neighbouring Spain has turned into a key-factor in the world's jazz-equation at the beginning of the 21st century. Anticipated by Iturralde's namesake album, *Flamenco jazz* is now one of the driving forces of this musical field. If in its "crude ore" state flamenco (like fado) is something of an acquired taste, its jazz-processing represents a *conquista* of recent Spanish culture. Temperamentally the Spaniards are by far more extrovert than the Portuguese. Flamenco is based upon the concept of *duende*, defining its magic, but also on the danceable pulsation called *compás*, the Spanish variety of swing, so to say. These have been melted into a fiery fusion with jazz, thanks to the endeavours of genuine creators stemming from Paco De Lucia's school. It is the case of the inexhaustible tandem Jorge Pardo/saxes & flute and Carles Benavent/electric bass. The latter simultaneously delivers fluid bass lines and tachycardic harmonies, accomplishing through his instrument a coalescence between Jaco Pastorius's heritage and the spirit of flamenco. In his turn, pianist Chano Dominguez morphs the harmonic opulence characteristic of the flamenco guitar into savoury sound-garlands on the keyboard. In 1996, Dominguez recorded *Hecho a Mano* together with his sagacious partners Javier Colina on bass and Uruguay-born Guillermo McGill on drums. The pianist also makes intelligent use of flamenco's implicit connection to the human body, by including dancer Joaquin Grilo in his ensemble. On the same album, Dominguez knows how to evince the potential of other outstanding musicians, the likes of guitarist Tomatito and drummer/percussionist Tino Di Geraldo. Commenting other milestone-records by the Andalusian pianist, Ted Panken wrote in *Down Beat*/February 2004: "The fact that Spain's contribution to 21st century jazz vocabulary will be more than a tinge is evident on *Iman* and *Oye Como Viene*, on which Dominguez presents his innovative hybrid of jazz, Latin folkloric and flamenco vocabularies".

Fascinated by resplendence of both flamenco and jazz, German producer Siegfried Loch (owner of the ACT-label) has encouraged two historical encounters of representatives from both idioms with American jazzmen Michael Brecker, Peter Erskine, Al Di Meola, Steve Kahn. This resulted in two albums entitled *Jazzpana I & II*. The Spanish team comprised amazing musicians, from Pardo, Benavent, Dominguez, Di Geraldo, to Juan Manuel Canizares, Gerardo Nunez, Renaud Garcia-Fons, Esperanza Fernandez. A significant addition is Perico Sambeat, an all-around saxophonist/flutist of impeccable neo-bop technique, seemingly predestined to become the intermediary between the Hispanic (not only musical) mentality – generous, but altogether haughty and self-sufficient – and the global jazz circuit. A native of Valencia, Perico has been going into memorable partnership with the jazz elite in his homeland, but also from the USA (Brad Mehldau, Mark Turner, Michael Brecker, Kurt Rosenwinkel), or Portugal (check up his joint operation with the *Carlos Barretto Quartet* resulting in the ravishing album *Olhar*/UpBeat Records, Porto, 1999).

The same lionhearted ACT-label conducted by Siegfried Loch was the first to bolster one for the uttermost acts of fusing Afro/American/European jazz essentials with the distinct universe of Vietnamese music. This feat has been accomplished by Paris-born Vietnamese guitarist Nguyễn Lê. An outspoken disciple of Jimi Hendrix, Lê experimented plenty of post-modern combinations – implying sonorous interaction with the Caribbean, Maghreb, India, Spain, Sardinia, Turkey, Norway, the U.S., etc. – before approaching the musical traditions of his own ancestors.

In this proceeding of identity-retrieval he acted reverently, carefully choosing his partners. Singer Huong Thanh, together with Hao Nhien Pham, Duong Chi Tam, Dinh Cong Tuyền on classical Vietnamese instruments, render the extraneous refinements of their pentatonic world with distinction and authenticity. Their occidental mates in such *sui generis* exploration are Paolo Fresu/tp, Simon S. Hansen/saxes, Michel Benita, Etienne Mbappé Renaud Garcia-Fons / basses, Tino Di Geraldo, François Verly, Steve Argüelles, Trilok Gurtu/dr., perc., Dominique Borker/kb a.o. Under Nguyễn Lê's sensible guidance, they expertly interweave improvisatory flights throughout this yet unheard East-West euphony, documented on three albums: *Tales from Vietnam*, *Moon and Wind* and *Dragonfly*. And here is one statement of Lê's: "Improvisation means freedom and ought to assert something that hasn't been expressed before. This principle is very close to that of meditation, as it functions

only if you give up control over it. You let the voice sing alone, not singing it yourself. That is trance". (*Jazzthetik*, 3/2000). This confirms some theses of Jürg Solothurnmann's study *About the Spirituality in Jazz and Improvised Music (Your Own Voice)*, Chronos Verlag, Zürich, 2004).

Nowadays, given the cautious cultural opening of the one-party-controlled societies of Vietnam and China, jazz music has at its disposal new colossal sources to draw inspiration from. With a century-long tradition in world exploration, the Portuguese have also pioneered this field. Let's think of Maria Joao's collaboration with Japanese pianist Aki Takase, and of the project which juxtaposed electric-bass player Antonio Ferro and Wong On Yuen, a master of the Chinese two-string violin called *Er-Hu* (their 1994 album is entitled *Sinais de Yuanju*).

Austrian sax/flute-player Wolfgang Puschnig has made a similar attempt at fusing jazz & Korean trad music mentalities, but couldn't achieve the same level of organicity as in Lê's Vietnamese or John McLaughlin's Indian explorations. Anyway, this is a sign that even the "hermit kingdom" might some time open up toward jazz liberties. In fact, already back in the 1980s, a remarkable Korean guitarist by the name of K. Lee was a member of the ethno-jazz group *Bumerang* in Soviet Kazakhstan. The paradox is that the much blamed Soviet "empire of evil" was the first to organise a Festival of Islamic Jazz in Tashkent, whereas in neighbouring Afghanistan the taliban regime (who had been installed with Western support) outlawed music altogether. A similar phenomenon happened in Turkmenistan, where Occidental music was prohibited by a megalomaniac dictator (strongly indebted to North Korea's Kim Il Sung), who seized power when that country proclaimed its independence in 1991.

New Changes and Expansions into the 21st Century

One typical aspect of recent years is the incapacity of many states to promote their own values on the international market. Reality forces us to acknowledge an overproduction crisis even in jazz. Austrian jazz encyclopaedist Emanuel Wenger ascertains that the number of jazz releases in the post Cold War era surpasses that of the records produced during the entire history of jazz. At present, there are perplexing differences in the amount of support provided for culture (and, implicitly, jazz) by different governments in Europe. As I emphasized before, this does not mean that the number of genuine talents born all over the Old Continent has decreased by any means. Nevertheless, in dealing with the economical discrepancies haunting Europe all the same, we should keep

in mind Thucydides's memorable sentence: "The strong do what they want and the weak bear what they must".

Because of lack of space, I shall refer only to some of the recent contributions originating from ex-socialist states to the development of a possible European identity in jazz. I have already mentioned some successors of avant-garde traditions in these countries. In the field of interferences between classical and jazz, this entire area stood under the influence of such emblematic figures as Stravinsky, Janacek, Bartók, Enescu, Shostakovich, Szymanowski. And one should never forget the proximity of the New Viennese School. These models have yielded successive generations of composers prone to empathy for jazz, or capable of assimilating local folklores into their works (thus encouraging the jazzmen's very preoccupation with this aspect): from Sergey Prokofiev, Witold Lutoslawski, Bohuslav Martinu, Alfred Schnittke, Krzysztof Penderecki or György Ligeti, to Pavel Blatny, Andrzej Kurylewicz, Arvo Pärt, Vinko Globokar, or Sofia Gubaydulina.

Despite a succession of repressive government from 1938 to 1989, covering the political spectrum from the extreme right to the extreme left, Romania has produced some valuable composers that can be added to those above: Theodor Rogalsky (1901-1954), whose *Suite of Dances from Transylvania, Dobruja and Wallachia* anticipates later orchestral achievements by Gil Evans or Don Ellis. A temporary liberalisation of the regime in the 1960s brought about the flourishing of a brilliant composing school, illustrated by Aurel Stroe, Cornel Țăranu, Sabin Pautza, Nicolae Brânduș, Horatiu Rădulescu, Anatol Vieru, Ștefan Niculescu, Octavian Nemescu, Myriam Marbé, Iancu Dumitrescu, Violeta Dinescu, and many more.

During the post-totalitarian years, jazz in Eastern Europe maintained its high aesthetic standards though its social status has not improved significantly. Nevertheless, this part of the world has continued to bring forth excellent musicians, with original contributions to the pan-global idiom of to-day's jazz. Here are those chosen for the European jazz Prize 2004 by a jury coordinated by Mathias Rüegg (yes, otherwise leader of the *Vienna Art Orchestra* – in itself a symbol of Central-European jazz emancipation!): pianist Bojan Zulfikarpasic/Bosnia-Herzegovina; singer Tamara Obrovac/ Croatia, reedsman Jiri Stivin/ Czechia; reedsman Mihály Dresch/ Hungary; reedsman Zbigniew Namysłowski/Poland; reedsman Nicolas Simion/ Romania; French-hornist Arkady Shilkloper/ Russia; trumpeter Juraj Bartos/ Slovakia; pianist Renato Chicco/ Slovenia. Another commendable initiative came

from Turkish percussionist Okay Temiz who in the 1990s formed *The Black Sea Orchestra*, selecting top jazzman from the countries surrounding the Black Sea. Each of them were given the chance to conduct an own composition, mainly based on his native folklore, while the others brought to the fore their own knowledge through extended improves and interplay. Bassoonist Alexander Alexandrov and trumpeter Yuri Parfenov came from Russia, viola-player Anatol Stefanet from Moldova, guitarist Enver Izmailov and accordionist Nariman Umerov from Ukraine, clarinetist Ivo Papazov from Bulgaria, bassist Zurab Gagnidze from Georgia, pianist Harry Tavitian from Romania, saxophonist Floros Floridis from Greece. The resulting synergism was astounding, eliciting enthusiasm even from listeners unfamiliar with Balkanoid resonances, as I found out attending *BSO's* performance in Lisbon, 2000. Similar transnational projects were successfully put into practice by Romania-born polyinstrumentalist Nicolas Simion (who emigrated to Austria shortly before the fall of the Berlin Wall), or by his compatriots Mircea Tiberian, Anca Parghel, Corneliu Stroe, Lucian Ban (the latter is the first Romanian to assert himself into New York's demanding jazz scene of the new century, by co-founding a remarkable group together with baritonist Alex Harding). During the first ever Romanian Jazz Week held abroad – at Vienna's *Porgy & Bess* in 2004 – Simion's group *Transylvanian Grooves* once again proved his ability to involve young musicians from different countries into jazz-imbued renditions of traditional Romanian themes: Franco-German pianist Florian Weber, Polish trumpeter Piotr Wojtasik, Macedonian bassist Martin Gjakonowski, and Argentinian (California-based) drummer Phil Maturano.

The most creative jazz transfiguration of the Romanian ethos has been achieved by the tandem Harry Tavitian/p, voc – Corneliu Stroe/dr, perc, euphonium. Unfortunately, their matchless, longer-than-two decades teamwork seems to have come to an end with an acclaimed tour of Transylvania in 2002. Both Constanța-based musicians have entered into exciting international partnerships, but their own mutual chemistry remains unsurpassed, though – alas – poorly documented. Characteristically, Tavitian's visions found their sources in the blues and in free jazz, as much as in the autochthonous *doina* or in echoes from classical Armenian composers (Sayat Nova, Comitas).

A consistent scanning of the overall Romanian melos – from Moldova to Oltenia, from Maramuresh to Wallachia, from Transylvania to Dobruja, from Banat to Bucovina etc. – has been attained by the

Bessarabian musicians bearing the name *Trigon*. They were discovered and launched by pianist Misha Alperin, soon after the proclamation of the so-called Republic of Moldova, in whose capital, Chişinău, they live. Anatol Stefanet – *Trigon*'s leader – is a consummate maestro of the viola, an instrument which he has brought to unprecedented prominence in the world of jazz. His group delivers a viable synthesis between the Romanian sensibility and the universal jazz-feeling. This feat has been fulfilled in close interaction with other high-class musicians: Oleg Baltaga/dr, perc.; Sergiu Testemitanu/b, Valeriu Caşcaval/dulcimer, Alexandru Murzac/b, Mario Căldăraru/perc. Their records have been released in five different countries (none at home) and they successfully toured the Planet, from Norway to New Zealand, from Russia to Spain, from Tuva to Germany from Japan to France, etc. Furthermore, Ştefanet founded a spectacular International Ethno-Jazz Festival held in Chişinău each September. To perform such exploits whilst confronted with the poverty and chaos engendered by a precarious administration verges on the incredible.

Not less hazardous is the situation in Georgia, although this is a country with centuries of own history. After retrieving its independence in 1991, Georgia got engulfed by civil war, corruption, social chaos. However, its specific Transcaucasian artistic creativity could not be stifled. In fact, one of the world's most original film-directors of our days – Otar Ioselliani – is Georgian, and his notable Armenian peer Sergey Paradjanov was also a native of Georgia's capital, Tbilisi. Vagif Mustafa-Zadeh, the Pontifex Maximus of Azerbaijani jazz, had close ties to the Georgian scene. There he founded his first own group, called *Orero* in 1967. Its young vocalist, Elza Vandzeladze would become his future wife. Accordingly, their well-known daughter Aziza, not only fused vocal and pianistic gifts, but may be regarded as the felicitous outcome of an Azerbaijani-Georgian concord.

One of Vagif's closest jazz mates was bass-player Tamaz Kurashvili, who has kept his father-figure status on the domestic stage until now. Proof of Kurashvili's musical exploits stand numerous recordings, but I was equally impressed by a photograph showing him in the act of accompanying the extraterrestrial jazzman Sun Ra (see William Minor's volume *Unzipped Souls*).

The most significant Georgian contribution to the extension of the jazz vocabulary has stemmed from a duo who call themselves *Shin* (Georgian for *homewards*): electric-bassist Zurab Gagnidze and guitarist Zaza Miminoshvili. Teaming up with other fabulous Georgian

jazzmakers – David Malazonia/keyboards, Avatandil Ungiadze/voc, duduk, Merab Sanodze/perk, voc, doli – they have issued an exquisite record under the name *Adio*, at the German label F & C in 1995. Besides being virtuosi of their instruments, all these musicians make simultaneous use of their voices. This polyphony is based on the traditional Georgian principle of three voices, which allows a high degree of improvisational freedom and involves sophisticated harmonic structures, melodic quality, unusual tone colours, thereby stirring the listeners' musical imagination. If *Weather Report's* mastermind Joe Zawinul (another major contemporary jazz modeller born right in the core of Europe, i.e. Vienna) concocted some sort of imaginary folklore, Gagnidze, Miminoshivili & Co. stick to ancestral patterns from their majestic mountainous homeland. Mysterious ties link the Georgians to the Basques (both people have hazy origins and speak idioms showing no close affinity with any other language). The explosive temperament of Georgia's natives, also stylised into tremendously acrobatic dances, infuses *Shin's* music with a vitality that calls to mind flamenco jazz's energetic outbursts. It is not by chance that Georgians call their country *Ivria*. The *Shin* themselves use the syntagm *Ibero-Caucasian style* to define their music. After 2000, the group has also employed the vocal abilities of Mamuka Ghaghanidze, and effervescent rhythmic tapestries generated by the American drummer of Polish descent Raymond Kaczynski. Another merit of *Shin's* lies in using Georgian words to contrive a specific form of scat.

This brings me to another characteristic in recent jazz: the growing acceptance of non-Anglo-Saxon idioms as legitimate conveyors of jazz feeling, and consequently an expansion of the latter notion. The phenomenon has its roots in the *bossa nova* wave of the early 1960s, when Portuguese proved unbeatable at rendering the musical gems created by Antonio Carlos Jobim, Vinicius De Moraes, and their Brazilian companions.

At the same time, Yugoslavia's *Predrag Ivanovic Vocal Quartet* swimmingly delivered their swinging harmonies in Serbo-Croatian. In the 1970s vocalists Aura Urziceanu in Romania, Elza Mustafa-Zadeh in Azerbaijan, Ewa Bem in Poland, Vlasta Hammerova in Czechoslovakia made convincing use of the respective national idioms in their jazz singing. In the next decade, Ildyz Ibrahimova combined Turkish and Bulgarian to good purpose.

After 1990 the examples have multiplied. Anca Parghel sang an entire album in Romanian, accompanied by pianist Mircea Tiberian. Their example was followed by singers Marta Hristea and Teodora

Enache, but the most convincing results have been reached by Maria Răducanu (who displays the qualities of a possible jazz-reincarnation of Maria Tănase, queen of Romanian song, with a similar local impact as Amália Rodrigues's in Portugal). *Trigon's* Anatol Stefanet resorted to some of Maria Tanase's spellbinding themes (which he even crooned in a coarse voice), as stepping-stones for his hot-tempered viola improvisations.

In Croatia, Tamara Obrovac sings a jazz-inflected brand of traditional songs from her native Histria Peninsula, in a Croatian dialect replete with Italianisms. *The Moscow Art Trio* (Misha Alperin/ piano, Arkady Shilkloper/ French-horn, Sergey Starostin/voice, folk instruments) have indulged into a daring multicultural experiment: bringing together a spectacular encounter between the Tibetan Buddhist chants (as rendered by the choir from Kyzyl, Tuva's capital) and the Russian/Siberian choir tradition. Their album *Molitva* (Prayer, RDM, Moscow, 1993) transposes European jazz perceptions into remote time and space, proving once again that the very process of music making/improvising implies a spiritual dimension, too often forgotten or even despised in times of gradual dehumanisation. Similarly, singer Valentina Ponomareva used words of Sanskrit origin with onomatopoeic scat-effects in her interpretation of Sofia Gubaydulina's *Sheptalki* (Fortune Teller).

Language, namely archaic Byelorussian, plays a central role in the musical concept promoted by the group *Troitsa* from Minsk. In Estonia, musicians like Lembit Saarsalu, Margus Kappel, Toivo Unt, Andrus Vaht, Paul Mägi had inserted field recordings of an ancient vocal technique, related to the Sami *Joik*, into their neo-bop/ethno-jazz mixture. An even more personal relationship between her own singing/fiddling and the musical folklore in the Czech and Slovak lands has been established by Iva Bittová. I myself have founded the first jazz-poetry loose outfit in Romania, under the name *Jazzographics*. Its shows are based upon my texts (which I recite in Romanian, English, German, Portuguese, Spanish, Italian, French, Serbo-Croatian, Russian, etc.), eliciting spontaneous musical interplay from trombonist Alan Tomlinson (a member of *London's Jazz Composers Orchestra*), pianist Harry Tavitian, percussionists Corneliu Stroe and Mario Florescu, and – occasionally – London-based violonist Alexander Balanescu.

After the collapse of totalitarianism, some East/Central European countries have fared economically better than others. The same can be said about jazz. Under Pawel Brodowski's wise leadership, the

extraordinary *Jazz Forum* magazine keeps on promoting ever exhilarating – both in quantity and in quality – new jazz from Poland. One national Jazz Federation that has been truly functioning is the Hungarian one. Consequently, its activity has led to an unprecedented upsurge in jazz (-related) music, musicians, festivals, recordings, clubs, educational opportunities, etc. A typical product of this prosperous situation is *Csaba Tüzkö's Septet* (with the leader on ts & taragot, Mihály Borbély/reeds, Ákos Csejte/as, Daniel Szabó/p, Mátyas Szandai/b, István Baló/dr).

Croatia has benefited from having a young generation representative at the helm of the Composers' Union. Born in 1971, Antun Tomislav Saban reached this position before he turned 30. His works nonchalantly defy pigeonholing by blending state-of-the-art conquests of musical craft with jazz's freewheeling spirit. Saban has openly promoted indigenous jazz forces – deriving mostly from the RTV Zagreb Big Band (founded in 1947) and from the catalytic example of vibist/bandleader/composer Bosko Petrovic. A powerful ensemble concentrating these forces is *Boilers All Stars*, in which all nine musicians provide personal contributions to a fresh perspective on postmodern jazz. No trace of local folklore here, and yet the atmosphere is very special. Although the canons of neo-bop are fully respected, we are spared any sterile mannerism. The music is infused with some Mediterranean-euphoria-meets-Central-European-*Gemuetlichkeit* type of energy (its Western counterpart might be the Catalan temperament). The source of such energy borders on metaphysics: these natural born jazzmen create music under the spell of their land's paradisiacal beauty. If there is a direct connection between the exotic splendour of Brazil or Cuba and the jazz inflections emanating from there, then such phenomenon is likely to happen in one of Europe's most beautiful countries too. The protagonists of *Boilers All Stars'* first album (*That Is*, recorded for the Cantus label in Zagreb, 2002) are: Davor Krzic/tp, flgh & leader; Miro Kadoic/as, fl.; Sasa Nestorovic/ts, ss; Damir Horvat/bars; Matija Dedic/p; Ante Gelo/g; Mladen Barakovic/b; Krunoslav Levacic/dr; Hrvoje Rupcic/perc.

A concoction of ethnic Lithuanian melos and jazz ecumenicity is documented on Skirmantas Sasnauskas's double-album *Lietuviskos Nuotikos* (Lithuanian Moods). The protagonist composed most of the pieces – incorporating native themes –, as well as indulged into improvisatory folklore-like variational developments on trombone, and a series of traditional Lithuanian instruments: most prominently the *dudmaisis* (bagpipe), but also the *ozio ragas* (goat horn), the *lumzdelis* (similar to a pan-pipe), the *kankles* (a stringed instrument). Marrying

music from a nation that has preserved one of the most archaic Indo-European languages with the utterly contemporary feel of jazz opens up pristine soundscapes. In his effort, Sasnauskas finds due support from team-mates Dainius Pulauskas/ p, kb; Linas Buda/ dr; Eugenijus Kanevicius/ double-bass; Vladislavas Borkovskis/ el-b; Gediminas Laurinavicius/ perc.

In Romania, the youngest generation is spearheaded by guitarist Sorin Romănescu and bassist Vlaicu Golcea, who indulge into a variety of projects – from reinterpreting traditional carols together with Maria Răducanu, to multimedia performances including choreography, video, live electronics, etc. in loose combinations featuring Marta Hristea, reedsman Cristian Soleanu, drummer Vlad Popescu, or the eccentric multi-instrumentalist Mihai Iordache (an alumnus of Tavitian's). Other active jazzmen are pianist Marius Vernescu (winner of the Montreux 2002 competition), bassists Pedro Negrescu and Arthur Balogh, percussionist Mario Florescu, reedsman Liviu Butoi, Romeo Cosma, Puiu Pascu, Petru Popa, trombonist Liviu Mărculescu, big band leader Ștefan Vannai, singer Ozana Barabancea, trumpeter Mihai Sorohan.

Jazz remains an isle of concord on a map replete with hotbeds of war. East-European cultures should not only strive towards recognition from the West, but also toward a better knowledge among themselves. I believe it is our common duty to fight for alternatives to both commercially and/or ideologically conditioned anti-art, which have invaded our planet's cultural markets. Opposing the alienating concepts of art as an industrial product, or as a mere propagandistic mass-manipulator, has become a question of professional ethics for all those involved in this field.

The jazz treasures still hidden in Europe's ex-totalitarian areas make this investigation look just like some preliminary evaluation. Further endeavours would certainly be worthwhile. Even if the abundance of names might seem a bit fastidious, I can assure you that behind each of them there is some deserving music to be heard, and for the most part enjoyed! Certainly, the relative marginalisation of these lands as compared to the world's "great powers" remains a fact. *En plus*, the exceeding supply on the globalised music market forcibly and unfairly relegates the majority of these artists to the "talent deserving wider recognition" category. Under these circumstances, there is nothing in a jazz critic's power but to bring forth such musicians according to their merit. To my mind, an increased mutual knowledge among the countries whose jazz achievements I have presented here is highly

desirable. The keyword is *solidarity* and if it functioned so marvellously in defying military dictatorship in Poland – remember *Solidarnosc* – why shouldn't we maintain our idealistic belief in it?

Then again, the myriad names and manifestations of the creative spirit I have mentioned here attest the strength of jazz prerequisites all over Europe (the more so as the majority of the countries under discussion were subjected to long periods of dictatorship). No doubt, in the beginning jazz was an Afro-American import. And jazz is for sure the United States' most original and coherent contribution to the enrichment of mankind's arts-patrimony. But neither can an informed observer deny the progressive emancipation of this music on the Old Continent, beginning with the second half of the past century. For decades on end musicians outside the States had not been able to overcome the complexes engendered by the alleged "genuineness" of canonised American patterns. Nowadays the situation is different. Only by expanding the concept of jazz to other aesthetic territories, shall we be entitled to consider it not only the music of the 20th century, but also the music of the future.