

An introduction to electroacoustic, noise and experimental music in Asia and Africa.

By C-drik Fermont, 2014-2015.

This essay as specified in the title is only a short introduction to the history of alternative electronic and experimental music in Asia and Africa, very few has been written on this topic and forgive me if I didn't mention some important composers or events, and if I didn't develop this topic a bit more regarding some countries, this is a work in progress that will lead to a book including a more detailed view on events, composers, music genres and other references. In the present paper, I speak about some major places where electro-acoustic and experimental music (mostly academical) developed or are under development and composed by local musicians, I purposely omit expatriates who live(d) and compose(d) there, not that their works as a lower value, it is simply not the topic of this paper.

We can trace back the first electric instruments and other tools in the 18th and 19th century : the Denis d'or (Václav Prokop Diviš circa 1748), the clavecin électrique (Jean-Baptiste Thillaie Delaborde, 1759), the musical telegraph (Elisha Grey, 1876), the telharmonium (Thaddeus Cahil, 1897-1901), the wire recorder (Valdemar Poulsen, 1898), the singing arc (William Duddell, 1899) and further experimental and electronic music compositions from the early twentieth century with inventions such as the intonarumori (Luigi Russolo, 1913), the theremin (Lev Sergeyevich Termen (Лев Сергеевич Термен, 1917), the pianorad (Hugo Gernsback, 1923) and staccatone (Hugo Gernsback, 1926), etc.¹

The official history also traces many events and characters who made big changes in the way of composing and / or generating experimental music in the Western world : Luigi Russolo (Risveglio Di Una Città - 1913), Ottorino Respighi (Les Pins de Rome - 1924), Darius Milhaud and his experiments with record manipulation to create music (1922), George Antheil (Ballet Mécanique - 1925), Paul Hindemith and Ernst Toch's experiment with electronically generated sounds (1928), Maurice Martenot and his Ondes Martenot (1928), Friedrich Trautwein, inventor of the Trautonium (1928), Walter Ruttmann (Wochenende - 1929), John Cage (Imaginary Landscape No. 1 - 1931), Yevgeny Alexandrovich Sholpo (Евгений Александрович Шолпо) and Georgy Mikhaylovich Rimsky-Korsakov (Георгий Михайлович Римский-Корсаков) and their optical synthesizer called the variophone (1932), László Moholy-Nagy, Oskar Fischinger and Paul Arma and their experiments to modify the physical contents of record grooves (1932), Laurens Hammond and John M. Hanert, with the Hammond organ (1933-1935), Yevgeny Murzin (Евгений Мурзин) and the ANS optical synthesizer (1937), Johanna Magdalena Beyer (Music Of The Spheres - 1938), Homer Dudley, inventor of the voder and vocoder (1940), Burnett Cross and Percy Grainger with their free music machine (1948), Pierre Schaeffer (Études aux chemins de fer - 1948), Raymond Scott with the Clavivox (1952), Karlheinz Stockhausen (Kontra-Punkte - 1952/1953), Werner Meyer-Epplers and Herbert Eimert (Four pieces - 1953), to name a few. Things go on and on across most European countries, Australia, New Zealand and the Americas but not only... Africa and Above all Asia have also developed their own electronic music history but very few books offer any references about this fact.

In most cases composers, musicians and studios weren't disconnected from the world for a simple reason : the world's modern culture became more and more global, technological tools would be sent and / or produced almost everywhere and now more than ever electronic music is part of a global human culture with its little differences and characteristics here and there.

¹ <http://120years.net>

Following the evolution of technology, its globalisation and step by step it's more affordable access, the evolution of communication, transport and media, it is not surprising that composers from Asia and Africa also made their way in the field of electronic, experimental, improvised and vanguard.

In regard to multiple discovery, science, art, social and political movements are similar. Multiple discoveries can occur at approximately the same time, various examples have been testifying this paradigm throughout history : two or more individuals or group of individuals (scientists, artists...) who independently make the same discovery or write about the same concept or theory for example.

Charles Bourseul, Johann Philipp Reis, Alexander Graham Bell, Elisha Gray (and some more), all of them have been attributed the invention or conceptualisation of the telephone, their papers were not word-for-word identical but the core ideas are similar.

The dada movement officially emerged in Zurich in 1916 but a similar movement already appeared in New York in 1915 and another one (connected to futurism) called 41° appeared in Georgia too in 1918 even if dada itself was unknown to them.

Russian futurists and Italian futurists shared many common ideas and while Luigi Russolo built his instruments to create noise, Vladimir Попов (Владимир Попов) made his own version of noise instruments in Russia as well approximately during the same period and Nikolai Nikolayevich Kryukov's (Николай Николаевич Крюков) sound tracks for *Изящная жизнь* (*Iziashnaya zhizn*, 1932) was obviously close to this notion of noise at a certain point too.

So did it happen for electronic, experimental and musique concrète. Even if the first tools which opened new ways of composing (and storing) music appeared first in the Western world, they quickly spread almost everywhere due to various factors (colonisation, war, capitalism, globalisation...) such as almost any new technology did.

The first experimental recording which has been made outside of Europe or the Americas is *Ta'abir al-Zaar* (re-named and published as an almost two minutes extracts under the name *Wire Recorder Piece*), a piece composed with a wire recorder² in Cairo, Egypt, by Halim El-Dabh (Halim Abdul Messieh El-Dabh, حلیم عبد المسيح الضبع) in 1944.³

In 1948, Japanese composer Tōru Takemitsu (武満徹) conceived a music in which he could use technology to "bring noise into tempered musical tones" and in 1949, another Japanese composer, Minao Shibata (柴田南雄) wrote that "someday, in the near future, a musical instrument with very high performance will be developed, in which advanced science technology and industrial power are highly utilised. We will be able to synthesise any kind of sound waves with the instrument"⁴.

As the first recording studios and university department dedicated to electronic music where mostly built in Europe and North America, plenty of composers from across the world came to study in these few centres, Halim El-Dabh became one of them at the Columbia-Princeton Electronic Music Center in 1958 (so was renamed the studio the following year), where in 1959 he composed the electro-acoustic piece *Leiyla And The Poet*.⁵

The same year, two other composers from Turkey also arrived at the centre : Bülent Arel who already composed *Music For String Quartet And Oscillator (1st Version)* in Ankara in 1957⁶ and İlhan Mimaroğlu who had already been exposed to electronic music in Ankara thanks to some

2 The wire recorder was a type of analogue audio storage in which a magnetic recording was made on thin steel or stainless steel wire. It was commercialised before the magnetic tape recorder.

3 Goran Vejvoda and Rob Young : *My Concrete Life - The Wire* issue 258, August 2005.

4 Thom Holmes : *Electronic and Experimental Music: Technology, Music, and Culture* (third edition), p.138.

5 Holmes 2008, 153–54 & 157

6 Pytheas Center for Contemporary Music : Bülent Arel (1919-1990) <http://www.pytheasmusic.org/arel.html>

recordings he received from France and the USA (Mimaroglu was a music critic back then).⁷

A few years earlier from 1955 until 1957 Chinese classical music composer Chou Wen-Chung (周文中) became the first technical assistant at the centre.⁸

All four composers never came back to their respective countries to compose electronic music even though Arel tried to do it in 1962 but his attempt failed due to the fact that the electronic equipment was never cleared at the customs, being considered as a security hazard and that the Middle East Technical University's board of directors did apparently not understand the importance of setting up an electronic music studio.⁹

Many other composers from all over the world went to study at the centre : from Turkey, Israel, Iran, Ghana, Japan, South Korea, Peru, Uruguay, Venezuela, etc.¹⁰

Other composers such as Japanese Toshirō Mayuzumi (黛敏郎) in the 1950's, Filipino José Maceda in the 1950's and Indonesian Slamet Abdul Sjukur in the late 1960's¹¹ went to study in Paris with Pierre Schaeffer, Israeli composer Josef Tal (יוסף טל) travelled to the major studios across Europe and North America, learned from them and brought with him a tape recorder back to Israel, then built the first electronic studio in 1961 at the Israel Center for Electronic Music at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, after an earlier failed attempt by Shalhevet Freier (שלהבת פריאר) in 1957¹²¹³, former South African (now Irish) composer Kevin Volans studied in the 1970's in Cologne at the Musikhochschule with Karlheinz Stockhausen¹⁴, to speak about a few.

From the beginning of the 1950's Chou Wen-Chung cultivated association with Asian composers such as José Maceda, Toshirō Mayuzumi and following in the 1960's with Tōru Takemitsu and Jōji Yuasa (湯浅譲二) (both co-founder of Jikken Kōbō, 実験工房, Experimental Workshop), and other classical music composers and scholars.¹⁵

Kuniharu Akiyama (秋山邦晴), another co-founder of Jikken Kōbō recorded the first electronic pieces made by a Japanese composer (*Piece B* and *Toraware No Onna*) in 1951.¹⁶ Jikken Kōbō was a group of mixed media projects and performing arts artists coming from various backgrounds : audio, visual art, poetry, etc. The group included among others Minao Shibata, Jōji Yuasa and Tōru Takemitsu who worked part time for the Tokyo Tsushin Kogyo (now Sony Corporation), where the prototype for a Japanese-made tape recorder called Type-G had recently been created. Members of the collective managed to have an arrangement with Tokyo Tsushin Kogyo KK to create demo tapes to promote the company's new recorder, while the TTK supported the Jikken Kōbō by providing some space to present their innovative works. Shibata and Takemitsu held the first concert for musique concrète and electronic music in Japan in 1952¹⁷ at the multimedia performance of the Jikken Kōbō, 5th Exhibition.¹⁸ Jōji Yuasa also composed *Another World* in 1953, a multimedia work for tape and slide projections.

In 1952 - 1953, Yasushi Akutagawa (芥川也寸志), Saburō Tominaga (富永三郎), and Shirō

7 Bob Gluck : Uptown and Downtown, Electronic Music and "Free Jazz", Ankara and New York - Interview with Turkish composer İlhan Mimaroglu.

8 <http://www.chouwenchung.org/biography/cv.php>

9 Bob Gluck : Electronic Music in Turkey, EMF Institute, 2006.

10 For a full detailed list, see Bob Gluck : Educating international composers: The Columbia-Princeton Electronic Music Center, EMS 2007. http://www.ems-network.org/IMG/pdf_GluckEMS07.pdf

11 <http://www.composers21.com/compdocs/sjukursa.htm>

12 Bob Gluck and Shlomo Dubnov : A Conversation with Josef Tal, EMF Institute.

13 Bob Gluck : Electronic Music in Israel, 2005. http://www.emfinstitute.emf.org/articles/gluck.israel_06.html

14 <http://www.kevinvolans.com/index.php?id=4>

15 <http://www.edition-peters.com/composer/Chou-Wen-chung>

16 Répertoire International des Musiques Electroacoustiques/International Electronic Music Catalog – compiled by Hugh Davies in Electronic Music Review Nos. 2/3, April/July 1967.

17 <http://www.galeriecapitain.de/artists/katsuhiko-yamaguchi/press/june-22-aug-31-2012-english.html>

18 Fujii, Koichi, 2004. Chronology of early electroacoustic music in Japan: What types of source materials are available? Organised Sound 9: 63–77

Fukai (深井史郎) were among those composers who worked independently from Jikken Kōbō and created radiophonic works on tape.¹⁹

Around the same period, after having studied with Pierre Schaeffer in Paris in 1952, Mayuzumi composed *Les Œuvres Pour Musique Concrète X, Y, Z* in 1953 in which twelve tone techniques were used to compose a short passage of cello music for part Z.

Some early electronic music by Japanese composers, including Shibata, Makoto Moroi (諸井誠) and Mayuzumi and their composition *Shichi No Variation* composed in 1956, was greatly influenced by serialism and works by Karlheinz Stockhausen.²⁰

Stockhausen whose name cannot be avoided went to Japan in 1966 to compose *Telemusik*.²¹ (Apart of Japan, he performed in a few non-Western countries such as Lebanon (in the Jeita grotto in 1969)²², Iran (at the Festival of Arts Shiraz-Persepolis in 1972)²³ and travelled to South Africa in 1971²⁴. He is definitely one of those who inspired composers all over the world and exposed some local audiences to electronic music from the 1950's onwards).

Karlheinz Stockhausen, John Cage and the conceptual artists Joseph Beuys and Wolf Vostell inspired Nam June Paik (백남준) while he studied and met them in Germany. This meeting pushed him to work in the field of electronic art.²⁵

His first experimental piece for tape (and performance), *Hommage À John Cage*, was composed in 1959.²⁶

The same year, Filipino artist and performer David Medalla composed two electronic music pieces (*Numerology* and *Antisyntax*) in Manila.²⁷

Multimedia experimentation was a common aspect of the 1950's and the following decades. Many audio artists collaborated together with visual artists, dancers, film makers, poets, theatres and various art groups saw the light, especially in Japan where a few neo-dada group appeared.

In 1954, Shōzō Shimamoto (嶋本昭三), Jirō Yoshihara (吉原治良), Akira Kanayama (金山明), Saburō Murakami (村上三郎) and Kazuo Shiraga (白髪一雄) founded the avant-garde group Gutai (具体). Shōzō Shimamoto well know for being one of the pioneers of mail art, worked with films, painting and also sound.

In 1958, he projected two different films on a single screen at the same time. Recorded sound was used to accompany the images, according to Shimamoto, the result was similar to musique concrète but called gutai music. Unfortunately, only some fragments of the piece remain.²⁸

In 1960 and 1961, the Group Ongaku (Music Group, グループ・音楽), which performed and recorded free jazz, improvised and experimental music pretty close to musique concrète included Chieko Shiomi (塩見允), Yumiko Tanno (淡野弓子), Yasunao Tone (刀根康尚), Shūkō Mizuno (水野修孝) and Takehisa Kosugi (小杉武久), was also involved in Fluxus.

19 Miki Kaneda : Electroacoustic Music in Japan: The Persistence of the DIY Model -

http://cnmat.berkeley.edu/user/miki_kaneda/blog/2007/12/20/electroacoustic_music_japan_persistence_diy_model

20 Thom Holmes : Electronic and Experimental Music: Technology, Music, and Culture (third edition), p. 141

21 http://www.karlheinzstockhausen.org/karlheinz_stockhausen_short_biography_english.htm

22 http://www.karlheinzstockhausen.org/dvd_order_form_english_2nd.htm

23 Bob Gluck : The Shiraz festival : avant-garde performance in Iran in 1970's Iran.

24 Michael Blake : A Very Short Overview of Electronic Music in South Africa, or "How we got into electronic music, and how not to get out again", 2013, <http://samusicresearch.wordpress.com/tag/michael-blake/>

25 Christiane Paul, Digital Art, Thames & Hudson, London, pp. 14–15

26 Nam June Paik "Hommage à John Cage: Music for Tape Recorder and Piano"

<http://www.medienkunstnetz.de/works/hommage-a-cage/>

27 Répertoire International des Musiques Electroacoustiques/International Electronic Music Catalog – compiled by Hugh Davies in Electronic Music Review Nos. 2/3, April/July 1967.

28 <http://artide.com.pagesperso-orange.fr/gutai/fr/ss.htm>

A few artists from Japan such as Yōko Ono (小野洋子), the aforementioned Akiyama, Tone, Kosugi and South Korean artist Nam June Paik participated to Fluxus and collaborated to experimental music events.

Tone was also a member of *Hi-Red Centre*, a happening group founded in 1963 and two years later he co-organised Fluxus Week, A Tokyo Fluxus festival with Toshi Ichianagi (一柳慧) and Kuniharu Akiyama and also founded Team Random - the first computer art group in Japan who organised the Biogode Process Music Festival in 1966 (the first computer art festival in Japan, which featured Tone's *Theatre Piece For Computer*).²⁹

In 1962, the experimental puppet Theatre Hitomi-za (ひとみ座, founded in 1948 and still active today) collaborated with Yuasa, Akiyama and Naozumi Yamamoto (山本直純) for a performance which took place at Sogetsu Kaikan Hall (inside the Sogetsu Art Centre, 草月アートセンター).³⁰

Meanwhile in Indonesia, composer Slamet Abdul Sjukur who also studied abroad, wrote a piece for tape and gamelan called *Latigrak* in 1963³¹, a work for a ballet created in Paris and choreographed by Frederic Franchini and a decade later, composed the multimedia piece *Parentheses IV*, for two dancers, flute, two electric guitars, violin, cello, prepared piano, synthesizer, percussion, and live painting. Six years later in 1969, The Pekan Komponis Muda (Young Composers Festival) was founded, along with educational programs at the Institut Kesenian Jakarta (Jakarta Institute of Arts).³²

It is also in 1969 that South Korean artist, Seok Hee Kang (강석희), who had studied in Berlin, founded the Pan Music Festival where himself and Byeong Ki Hwang (황병기) performed a piece for daekum and tape, in 1976 (Seok Hee Kang had already composed at the Seoul Central Broadcasting Station (KBS) his first piece for tape in 1966 : Wonsaegui Hyangyeon. Doo-Jin Ahn composed a multimedia piece for flute, tape and slide projection in 1973 at the North Carolina University : *Yong Na's Sipjagau Hwansang* and was performed at The Myeongdong Art Theater (명동예술극장).³³

A major event which took place from the late sixties was the Festival of Arts Shiraz-Persepolis in Iran, the most important performing art festival in the world dedicated to theatre, dance, classical, traditional and electronic music and so on from 1967 until 1977 where many contemporary classical and electronic music composers performed or were introduced to the large audience thanks to their commissioned works : John Cage, David Tudor, Karlheinz Stockhausen, Iannis Xenakis (Γιάννης Ξενάκης) but also Iranian composers like Alireza Mashayekhi (علیرضا مشایخی, who studied electronic music at the Instituut voor Sonologie (Sonology Institute) of the university of Utrecht, the Netherlands) and Dariush Dolat-Shahi (داریوش دولت‌شاهی, who studied electronic music in the same institute, at the conservatory of music in Amsterdam and at the Columbia-Princeton centre later) for example, who both composed electronic music pieces from the mid sixties.³⁴

They were soon followed by Shahrokh Khajenouri (شاهرخ خواجه نوری), in the 1970's, who

29 <http://www.artpool.hu/Fluxus/HiRedCenter.html> and <http://asphodel.com/artists/view.php?Id=6>

30 *Obscure Tape Music of Japan vol.2 : Music For Puppet Theatre Of Joji Yuasa / Kuniharu Akiyama*, CD note.

31 Robert J. Gluck : *Free Sound Within Culturally Specific Practice*, Department of Music, University at Albany. <http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.380.6847&rep=rep1&type=pdf>

32 Bob Gluck : *Electronic Music in Indonesia*, EMF Institute, 2006. http://cec.sonus.ca/econtact/11_3/indonesia_gluck.html

33 Bob Gluck : *Electronic Music in South Korea*, The EMF Institute, 2007. http://www.emfinstitute.emf.org/articles/gluck.korea_07.html

34 Mahasti Afshar : *Festival of Arts Shiraz-Persepolis or You better believe in as many as six impossible things before breakfast*. http://asiasociety.org/files/uploads/126files/Shiraz-Persepolis_FINAL2_Print_1117-2013.pdf

dedicated most of his compositions to electronic music.³⁵

Around the same time in Israel, poet Recha Freier (רחה פריאר) and composer Roman Haubenstock-Ramati started Testimonium, in 1966, a triennial festival which took place six times and included music by some early electronic music composers like Tzvi Avni (צבי אבני), who founded the second electronic music studio in Israel at the Academy of Music and Dance in Jerusalem), Yizhak Sadai (יצחק סדאי), who founded the third Israeli electronic music studio in Tel Aviv in 1974), among others.³⁶

Obviously, during the 1970's experimental music and electronic music reached more places than ever before and got a bigger audience.

The first World Fair Expo in Asia took place in 1970 in Osaka (Expo '70, 日本万国博覧会) and incorporated electronic music composers from various places like Xenakis, Stockhausen, Yuasa, etc. and presented electronic and multi channels works to thousands of visitors.

Filipino experimental composer José Maceda, who was exposed to musique concrète in 1958 - 1959 in Paris created some public performances that could be defined as a sort of live musique concrète in 1971 : *Cassettes 100*, a piece which consists of various instruments (gongs, buzzers, aluminium objects, horns, and many more) and voices recorded on a hundred tape recorders and in 1974 for new year's eve, *Ugnayan*, a performance for twenty cassettes to be simultaneously performed in public spaces by thirty-seven different radio stations (twenty radio stations broadcasting the twenty tapes, each one containing a different recording of several instruments and seventeen other playing seventeen of the selected tapes to boost or amplify others) ; thousands of people carried radios in the streets, parks, school grounds and other public spaces contributed to the amplification intensity and diffusion of the piece across Manila and its suburb.^{37 38} The medium used calls to mind John Cage's Imaginary Landscape No. 4 but provided a different result.

With the exception of Dutch composer Henk Badings (born Hendrik Herman Badings) who composed in 1957³⁹ the radio opera *Asterion* for which he used electronic manipulation of musical or natural sounds⁴⁰ (made in the studios of the SABC in collaboration with poet Nicolaas Petrus van Wyk Louw) the first electronic music compositions and recording studio in South Africa apparently saw the light around 1966 in Kenhardt⁴¹, a few years later another studio opened in the early 1970's partly thanks to June Schneider⁴² who produced in 1971 a multimedia work including electronic music called *Encounter Time And Space* performed at the Johannesburg Planetarium⁴³. That music studio was established by Ulrich Suesse (Ulrich Süße), who was lecturer for composition, at the University of KwaZulu-Natal the in Durban in 1973 and was built around an ARP-2500 synthesizer.^{44 45}

35 Arshia Cont and Bob Gluck : Electronic Music in Iran. CEC, eContact, 11.4.

36 Bob Gluck : Electronic Music in Israel, 2005. http://www.emfinstitute.emf.org/articles/gluck.israel_06.html

37 Unknown book, pp 88 - 91

38 <http://www.interaksyon.com/infotech/bytes-and-bamboo-jose-maceda-meets-manila%E2%80%99s-musical-underground>

39 Première in 1958 for the Suid-Afrikaanse Uitsaaikorporasie / the South African Broadcasting Corporation.

40 Mark Morris's Guide to Twentieth Century Composers. http://www.musicweb-international.com/Mark_Morris/Holland.htm

41 Répertoire International des Musiques Electroacoustiques/International Electronic Music Catalog – compiled by Hugh Davies in Electronic Music Review Nos. 2/3, April/July 1967.

42 Michael Blake : A Very Short Overview of Electronic Music in South Africa, or "How we got into electronic music, and how not to get out again", 2013, <http://samusicresearch.wordpress.com/tag/michael-blake/>

43 In a conversation with Michael Blake.

44 In Leonardo Music Journal, Vol. 16 pp. 62-63, 2006 - Unyazi, Special Section Introduction by Jürgen Bräuninger.

45 In a conversation with Ulrich Süße.

Step by step more studios opened across the world and composers could more easily access those to record and perform tape, electronic and experimental music, among many of them we can mention in Israel, Yossi Mar-Chaim (יוסי מר-חיים) who composed his first piece for tape in 1967, Aminadav Aloni (1974) (עמינדב אלוני), Menachem Zur (1970) (מנחם צור), in Indonesia Yose Haryo Suyoto, Harry Ruesli's *Batas Echo* (1978), Otto Sidharta's *Saluang Pekan Komponis I* (1979) and Franki Raden's *Dilarang Bertepuk Tangan di Dalam Toilet* (1980). Sapto Raharjo's first electronic composition, *Yogyharmonik 78*, is also from this period.⁴⁶

In Taiwan, Lee Tai Hsiang (李泰祥), well known for his more popular and traditional music works, has in all likelihood been the first artist to compose some experimental music in the early 1970's.⁴⁷

From the late 1970's across the 1980's and 1990's, some parallel scenes were born thanks to the emergence of the audio cassette and the development of the electronic instruments market proposing a larger variety of instruments for a more affordable prices. Composers needn't necessary go to expensive recording studios to record their music, home studios starting to emerge and many electronic and experimental music artists would work at home, record their music on cassette and duplicate them to finally distribute them via home taping networks, mail art, record stores, fanzines, concerts and festivals.

Due to the fact that Japan became the leader of electronic music instrument production, it became easier and cheaper for some local artists to set up their private studios.

Isao Tomita (冨田勲, one of the fathers of cosmic music in Japan who, like Walter/Wendy Carlos interpreted a lot of classical music with synthesizers, or Ryūichi Sakamoto (坂本龍一, who co-founded the eletro-pop band Yellow Magic Orchestra) in 1977 were among those who produced outside of the academical world.

From that point the Japanese electronic and experimental music scene exponentially exploded. In the end of the 1970's and through the 1980's many subgenres of experimental and extreme music appeared, such as janoise (Masami Akita (秋田昌美), also known as Merzbow, Hijōkaidan, Incapacitants, Hanatarashi...) and later in the 1990's, onkyokei (Toshimaru Nakamura (中村としまる), Sachiko M, Yoshihide Ōtomo (大友良英), Tetuzi Akiyama (秋山徹次), Taku Sugimoto (杉本拓) and so on). Japan has been one of the first Asian country to develop a non academical scene devoted to electronic and experimental music, that influenced and is still influencing many artists from China, Indonesia, Malaysia, Europe, the Americas, Australia...

Around the beginning of the 1980's, Israel also saw the emergence of a cassette culture scene dedicated to industrial, noise, experimental and improvised music, some of those active artists to mention were or are still Duralex Sedex, Seventeen Migs Of Spring, Silence & Strength, Wreck & Drool, Maor Appelbaum (מאור אפלבוּם), Eran Sachs (ערן זקס), etc.

Another non-academical experimental scene influenced by various industrial, new wave punk and experimental scenes from the western world emerged in Turkey in the middle of the 1980's as well, audiovisual artists like 2/5 BZ (Serhat Köksal) took part of the tape scene too in a lower scale than the one in Japan.

The few industrial or experimental music artists in Turkey from that time got exposed to the noise, experimental, industrial, metal or punk scenes thanks to Turkish friends or relatives working abroad, especially in London and Berlin.⁴⁸

46 Bob Gluck : Electronic Music in Indonesia, EMF Institute, 2006.

http://cec.sonus.ca/econtact/11_3/indonesia_gluck.html

47 <http://lth.e-lib.nctu.edu.tw/en/bio-1.htm>

48 Sezgin Boynik, Tolga Güdallı : An interrupted history of punk and underground resources in Turkey 1978-1999, BAS.

Khazakstan, back then part of the USSR also had also a few electronic music composers, among them Ganzha (Vadim Ehrlich) who assembled his first analogue synthesizer and started to compose from 1980.⁴⁹

It is also in the late 1980's that some composers in Hong Kong like Li Chin Sung (李劲松, aka Dickson Dee) and Xper Xr started to get involved in electronic, industrial, noise and experimental music ; Xper Xr published his first two track cassette *Murmur* in 1989.

Around the same period, in 1984, Zhāng Xiǎofū (张小夫), Chén Yuǎn Lín (陈远林), Zhū Shì-ruì (朱世瑞), Tán Dùn (谭盾), Chén Yí (陈怡) and Zhōu Lóng (周龙) organised the first electronic music concert of China at the Central Conservatory of Music in Beijing. In 1984 too, Zhū Shì-ruì, collected a few synthesizers here and there to compose his piece *Goddess*, for seven synthesizers.

The same year, Luó Jīng Jīng (罗京京) composed her first electroacoustic piece called *Estuary* for electronics and instruments in New York, and in 1986, she composed another piece : *Monologue*, for percussion, voice and analogue processing, commissioned and premiered by Kei Takei's Moving Earth Dance Company at St. John's Divine Cathedral, New York.⁵⁰

In 1986, Chén Yuǎn Lín founded the first studio at the Central Conservatory of Music in Beijing , he had traveled abroad to study at the State University of New York at Stony Brook, the same year he composed two pieces : *Hao* and *Nü Wa Bu Tian*.

Zhang Xiaofu composed his first electronic work, *Yīn*, for bamboo flute and tape, in 1987.⁵¹

While some electronic music forms became more popular, the film industry became very interested in the unlimited potential of electronic compositions, tape effects and experimental composition, especially for horror, science-fiction and fantasy films.

In 1974, Israeli composer Aminadav Aloni composed an electronic film score for the film *Once*, Indonesian composer Gatot Sudarto produced in the 1970's and 1980's some electronic sound tracks for films such as *Si boneka kayu*, *Pinokio* (1979) and *Leák* (Mystics in Bali, 1981), Jaime Fabregas in the Philippines composed an electronic sound track for *Shake Rattle & Roll* (1984), in India Ajit Singh composed a sound track mainly made of electronic music for the film *Purana Mandir* (1984), in North Korea, So Jong Gon composed some electronic pieces for *Pulgasari*, in 1985, in Japan : a lot of electronic effects were used in the 1961 science-fiction film 宇宙快速船 (*Uchu Kaisoku-sen*, in English, published as *Invasion Of The Neptune Men*), a noise and industrial sound tracks by Chū Ishikawa (石川忠) can be heard in *Tetsuo* (1989).

In mainland China the first electronic music composition to appear on a film in the mid 1980's was composed by Zhāng Xiǎofū and Chén Yuǎn Lín for a three-episode Chinese television drama.⁵²

Since the mid and late 1990's and even more since the 21st century, partly due to various factors such as the internet connections being more accessible, some policy of openness, an even bigger globalisation of any kind of market, communications media and culture, people started to get an easier access to electronic and experimental music, a few little pockets developed here and there in the mid 1990's in Vietnam (especially in Hanoi thanks to composers such as Nguyễn Xuan Son and Kim Ngọc Trần Thị) and in Lebanon (which is one of the few middle eastern countries to have an active scene and festivals like Irtijal organised by improv musician Sharif Sehnaoui and regular events dedicated to experimental and improvised music in Beirut).

A strong do-it-yourself scene emerged in China thanks to various musicians : such as Yán Jùn (颜

49 Vadim Ehrlich's biography : <http://ziart.kz/ganz.html>

50 <http://jingjingluo.com>

51 Marie-Hélène Bernard : Le développement de la musique électroacoustique en Chine continentale, EMS, 2008.

52 Bob Gluck and Ping Jin : A Conversation with Zhang Xiaofu, 2005.

峻) in Beijing around 1999 and quickly spread in most big Chinese cities.

Taiwan also saw it's noise, experimental and industrial music network growing in the 1990's thanks to various artists like Lín Chí-Wèi (Eric Lin, 林其蔚) and the band Z.S.L.O.

South Africa also saw a small DIY tape scene appear from the 1980's and 1990's with artists such as Kalahari Surfers and Jay Scott (Sphinx) and his cassette label Network 77 promoting South African underground music among others.

There are nowadays in the 21st century plenty of noise and sound artists, electro-acoustic music composers, from academies or do-it-yourself backgrounds, some scenes and regular events in countries such as Thailand, Singapore, Malaysia, Egypt, Tunisia, Macau and so on, step by step some little pockets also emerge in other countries, often connected to visual art and/or electronica, in Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nigeria, Angola, Algeria, Armenia, Uzbekistan, Mongolia, Myanmar, to name a few.

Their history has still to be written !

Thanks a lot to [Kibla](#) for asking me to write this essay (a paper version both in English and Slovenian will be soon available).

Thanks to Robertina Šebjanič, Yan Jun, Bob Gluck, Lin Chi-Wei, Tengal Nolasnem, Merv Espina, Anitha Silvia, Yang Licai, Goh Lee Kwang, Lee Wen, Dickson Dee, Ulrich Süße, Michael Blake, Halim El-Dabh, Redha Moula, Nguyễn Xuan Son, Lương Huệ Trinh, Kim Ngọc Trần Thị , Tri minh, Đào Anh Khánh and many more for their precious help.

This version was updated and corrected in February 2015, other versions of this essay will be sooner or later translated in Arabic, German, simplified Chinese, Indonesian, French and more. If you want to translate it in your language, please, feel free to contact me at cdrk@syrphe.com.

Selected discography.

1950's – 1990's.

[Halim El-Dabh – Crossing Into The Electric Magnetic](#)

[Bülent Arel & Daria Semegen – Electronic Music For Dance](#)

[Toru Takemitsu – Works Of Toru Takemitsu](#)

[Toshiro Mayuzumi – Tokyo Olympiad](#)

[José Maceda – Ugnayan](#)

[Alireza Mashayeki - Alireza Mashayeki](#)

[Dariush Dolat-Shahi – Electronic Music, Tar And Sehtar](#)

[Makoto Moroi / Kuniharu Akiyama – Music Drama Akai Mayu](#)

[Toshi Ichihyanagi – Electronic Field](#)

[Group Ongaku – Music Of Group Ongaku](#)

[Sukhi Kang, Beate-Gabriela Schmitt – Man Pa/Thal/Mosaico/Klangspuren](#)

[Joji Yuasa – Music For Experimental Films](#)

[Joji Yuasa / Kuniharu Akiyama – Music For Puppet Theatre Of Hitomi-Za](#)

[Nam June Paik – Works 1958.1979](#)

[Joseph Dorfman, Yizhak Sadai – Electroacoustic Music](#)

[Ulrich Süße – Komposition Mit Elektronik](#)

[Aminadav Aloni – Once](#)

[Xper Xr – Murmur](#)

[Z.S.L.O. - Z.S.L.O.](#)

[Li Chin Sung – Past](#)

Chu Ishikawa – Tetsuo

Compilations.

Experimental Music Of Japan

Ear Magazine Presents Absolut CD #2, The Japanese Perspective

Experimental Music Of Japan '69

Concert: 20-21

10 時間 / Ju-Jikan: 10 Hours Of Sound From Japan

Nothing Works As Planned

Israeli Electroacoustic Music

Beyond Ignorance And Borders - An African, Middle-Eastern, Asian noise and electronic compilation

30.2 - Electronica, experimental and noise from Africa

Art Of The Muses - An experimental music compilation featuring ten female composers from Far East Asia

موسيقى تجريبية لفنانات مصريات Egyptian Females Experimental Music Session

Periférico: Sounds From Beyond The Bubble

Soundtracks For Bride Of Sevenless - A survey of Asian sound activity: 1997 – 1998

Eternal Blue Extreme: An Asian Tribute To Derek Jarman

An Anthology Of Chinese Experimental Music 1992-2008

The Fifth Complaint Concerns Emotional Disturbances

Munen Muso 1

The Ruptured Sessions Volume 5.



C-drík – last update 27 January 2015

<http://www.syrphe.com>

http://syrphe.com/african&asian_database.htm