# MUSICIANS AND THE SECRET FRONT OF INTELLIGENCE

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***Abstract:*** *This paper aims to address in an interdisciplinary manner a field previously ignored by the intelligence literature, but so present in every major confrontation of the world, especially during intelligence wars which are so specific for modern times. The enrollment of the great musicians on the unseen front of intelligence clash will be approach from a historical descriptive perspective, but it will be enriched by studying the manner musicians involved themselves to support one side of the conflict or another. We will examine different data to conclude whether it is possible to find a model for musicians' choices. We presume that education and socialization of musicians conduct to a specific mental model and a personality type that complement each other in order to explain their life choices including those made on intelligence front. The case of Romanian musician Maria Tănase will be discussed in this context.*

***Keywords****: musicians, intelligence, personality, HUMINT*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

While life is a mosaic composed of a lot of different pieces, we are scholarly treating them individually trying to understand all the mechanisms of one process but rarely considering pieces in their interdependency. But people will never understand social reality except they analyze the world the way it is. For this reason I chose to take a closer look to the relationship between intelligence and music, namely to understand the reasons why many great musicians involved in intelligence activities.

## 2. MUSICIANS AND INTELLIGENCE

**2.1. Musicians' specific personality.** A topic regarding the specific characteristics of certain social categories are not of recent date. Only part of explanations has contemporary roots, while social psychology is substantially contributing to the field through a lot of theories within social identity, stereotypes, social representations, collective memory or social thinking. Of course the main coordinates of modal personality of a social class or another will prevail being salient to the others. Therefore, there is nothing extraordinary to refer to the personality of musician as a standalone prototype, which can imprint his behavior with a number of recognizable common elements. It is obvious that music requires a lot of sacrifices and therefore such a pattern contains cognitive abilities, high motivations, will and discipline. The special organization of these traits can provide a distinctive sign to all behavioral manifestations of musicians, structuring their emotions and even their perception of the world in a particular manner (Bogunović, 2012).

Regarding the musicians, the main question raised was what determines them to spend such a long time for studying or producing music. As expected, studies have revealed that there are major differences between the musicians and the others. According to a study conducted by the University of Melbourne (Kaufmann & Rawlings, 2004), the musicians are different from the rest of the population by being more open, conscientious and enjoyable. These results were confirmed in 2012 at University of Arts in Serbia (Bogunović, 2012), highlighting a significant correlation between openness to new experiences and independence of thought, imagination, creativity, spirit, active imagination, aesthetic sensibility, inner receptivity, preference of diversity, intellectual curiosity and divergent thinking. In addition, this study revealed the variability of these traits under the impact of cultural software (Hofstede, 1991) that every person is carrying.

**2.2 HUMINT' abilities and musicians' characteristics?** While it is a truism to assert that intelligence is one of the oldest trades of mankind, it is still necessary to clarify some of its concepts in order to allow us an interdisciplinary approach of human motivation for engaging in this type of activity. Gathering the data from society and their transforming in intelligence which support authority decision involves a multistep process called intelligence cycle. Intelligence cycle includes several stages that are logically succeeding (Waltz, 2003:34): planning and direction (identifying, prioritizing, and validating intelligence requirements and continuously monitoring the availability of the collected date), collection (developing collection guidelines that ensure optimal use of available intelligence resources), processing (conversion of the collected information into a form suitable for the production of intelligence), production (the process of analyzing, evaluating, interpreting, and integrating raw data and information into finished intelligence products for known or anticipated purposes and applications) and dissemination (conveyance of intelligence to the consumer in a usable form).

Michael Warner (2009:15) synthesized all the dimensions and understandings that specialists in the field associates with the term of intelligence showing that it represents in the same time the intelligence delivered to beneficiaries and the operations performed on the front of secret war.

As Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) stated that „intelligence is the knowledge and forecasting of the world around us, as a prelude for political decision" (CIA, 1999:7). Therefore, the collection of data and information needs different sources of information, which are called INT'S in the literature (HUMINT – human intelligence, SIGINT – signals intelligence, IMINT – imaginary intelligence, OSINT – open source intelligence and so on) (www.fbi.gov/about-us/intelligence/disciplines). Regardless of space or historical period to which we refer, human intelligence (abbreviated HUMINT) is recognized to be crucial to the success of the intelligence cycle. HUMINT may include secret defensive and offensive elements such as casual informants, the information agent, the agent of influence, investigational agent, or support agent. In the same way the technical characteristics of a modern drones are essential to the quality of images and sounds you can collect, the personality of data collector is a crucial variable for the quality of information.

As defined by the Romanian Intelligence Service the information agent is a person who voluntarily provides and collects information, which can be correlated with data from other sources (technical, open) in order to provide a more complete view of risks and threats for national security (www.sri.ro/surse-umane.html). There are numerous historical references that illustrate how important is the personality of collector for the success of this process. Every civilization has its own pantheon of iconic references to HUMINT practices (Sayre Jr.).

Probably the most comprehensive references to human sources of information are found in China. The most influential Chinese military thinker, Sun Tzu (2004) advocated for type of warfare that prioritize strategy of avoiding and capitalize weaknesses, including the use of propaganda, disinformation or psychological warfare methods. But such activities can be conducted only by persons with special observation capability and decoding situations. Sun Tzu considered the sources of information as "the treasure of the sovereign" believing that they must be very generously rewarded.

Another imposing concern for human sources of information appears in Hindu Arthashastra treaty of government and military art. Traditionally, Kautilya is credited as the author of the text and is said to have been an Indian ruler advisor of the 4th century B.C. In his work he gives a central role to the intelligence system considering it as the only method to have a high degree of control inside the states. The Arthashastra includes characterization of different types of personalities (angry, greedy, diligent, or easily insulted) and also the guidelines on how to relate with them. Kautilya considers HUMINT 's integrity as the most important quality of sources, while they also need to be bold, nimble, intelligent, and having the knowledge of men and society (Kautilya, 1992:577-578, *apud* Sayre Jr.). Ancient Mediterranean civilizations, especially Alexander the Great and Hannibal, also employed HUMINT collectors to supply knowledge of the foreign lands, their cultures, and peoples.

The modern view is in close consistency with the views of the theorists of the ancient world. The ancient idea that HUMINT collectors must be characterized by integrity, intelligence, wisdom, subtlety, sophistication, and the ability to judge character as well as their motivation, truthfulness, and reliability is completely validated in the writings of modern practitioners and theorists. For example, KGB used a similar approach: sources of information should be honorable person in the broadest sense, have a total range of moral and social values, education and knowledge, the refinement of heart and mind, mental and moral virtues. From all ancient and modern sources one conclusion is underlined: the collector should be a person of great integrity, intelligent and wise,

subtle, sophisticated, courageous. Good HUMINT required discretion, patience, tact, calmness, subtlety, force of mind, and prudence, but also intelligence, emotional stability, social skills, observation skills, communications skills, and initiative, sense of humor, basic honesty (Laqueur, 1993), which are exactly the competencies described as valid for musicians' personality as the previous studies revealed.

**2.3. Historical reference for sources of information within artistic field.** States honors its collaborators, despite conflicting perceptions of the civil society regarding persons involved in intelligence activities, which scrolls between the James Bond romantic stereotypes to the unscrupulous spy. The French secret service uses a category of sources that works for free, only for honor, called *colaborateur d'honneur*. They offer their services out of patriotism and wish to remain anonymous. Also, the Germans considered that intelligence gathering is a noble trade (*ist ein Nachrichtendienst Herrendienst*) (Petrescu, 2007:76-77).

In the same way artists accept to offer the power of their arms in the service of the state. There are many examples of famous artists' involvement in informative activities, especially in the direction of influence, but also on the dimension of operative activities. The most important reason of this involvement is artists' personality which is a good prerequisite for obtaining desirable results in the intelligence activity. A simple comparative analysis of the findings of the two previous paragraphs illustrates the almost perfect overlap between the ideal portrait of the source of information and personalities of artistic world.

The first singer historically certificated to be involved in informational activities was the Italian Atto Melani (1626 - 1714), used as a secret agent by the famous Cardinal Mazarin. Later, during the Bolshevik revolution, Nadezhda Pleviţkaia (Grozovsky) (1884-1940) became a Bolshevik and she sang for Red Army soldiers. In 1930, she was recruited by Soviet intelligence service GRU (later the NKVD) and married to a representative of the opposition. Never abandoning her initial convictions, she was involved in the abduction and transportation from Paris to Moscow of the head of the Russian opposition, who was executed. The singer Zarah Leander (1907-1981) was successful in Germany, Scandinavia and the USA. She was not only involved in Nazi propaganda, but also in informative activities. It seems to have been in the service of Soviet espionage until the 1950s, under the code name "Rose Marie". A Soviet officer said she helped them to make a picture about the situation in northern Europe and the interests of Anglo -

American and German in the region. The American singer Josephine Baker (1906-1975) obtained French citizenship through marriage and was directly involved in informative actions. She transmitted military information between France to Portugal which was written with invisible ink on his musical scores. Josephine Baker was using her beauty to determine various consulates to issue visas for undesirable persons for the Axis powers. Vico Toriani (1920 - 1998) was among the first singers of pop music in the West that made concert tours in countries beyond the Iron Curtain, including Romania. It seems he was also transmitting information about them.

While the previous examples refer to musicians as collectors of data, there are musicians that have assumed even the role of intelligence officers, e.g. the CIA employee, musician Miles Copeland, Jr. (1916 - 1991) who played an important role in a number of foreign policy operations. Boris Morros (1891- 1963) was a Russian violinist, who emigrated in 1922 to Great Britain, and in the US in 1930. He was recruited by Soviet intelligence in 1934, codenamed "Frost" and from 1947 he also becomes a FBI agent. This unexpected dimension of our world underlined once again how the "binding role of music is not limited to the actual understanding of music as language, but rather as a form of knowledge extending from linguistic and the communicative level to an integrative cultural level." (Lesenciuc, 2015), and this level could signify sometimes to defend their country and beliefs through all means.

**2.4. An unexpected Romanian HUMINT - Maria Tănase.** One of the most beloved singers of popular music in Romania, Maria Tănase (1913-1963) is a hot topic for historians of the era, who are trying to provide a pertinent answer to the question: Was Maria Tănase a Romanian intelligence agent? Her fans reject the possibility, as if such an activity could defile her memory. Others consider the relationships she established inside the high society of the time as an argument favoring this hypothesis.

Historians have found fairly consistent evidence about the intelligence activities of Maria Tănase. For example, in his memory book, Ivor Porter, a the British agent who carried out intelligence operations in Romania during the Second World War, states the existence of some connections between the head of the Romanian Secret Service, Eugen Cristescu, and Maria Tănase. Why and how did this great singer of Romania enter the backstage of espionage? The answer may seem complicated, if we ignore the previous principles of intelligence and refrain ourselves to a narrow paradigm of thoughts. But

considering what we underlined before, persons that is asked to help his country involving in intelligence operations should prove some specific characteristics of intelligence, subtlety, honesty, loyalty, openness of mind, and perseverance.

At the time, Maria Tănase was a beautiful woman, fashionable, having an unusual voice – she had all the ingredients for the success recipe. Being heard for the first time in 1938, at the station Radio Bucharest, she almost instantly became known, sought and desired on all scenes or in all restaurants. Being invited in almost every interesting event of Bucharest, it was almost natural to appear a man - Maurice Negre, a handsome French journalist, who conquered her instantly. For a while they formed one of the most fashionable couple of the time in Bucharest. Still, for the Romanian Secret Service, led by Michael Moruzov was not difficult to learn that Maurice was the French espionage resident for Romania and then for South-Eastern Europe. On neutrality principles, the French spy was tolerated until the moment when Romania changed its system of alliances hoping to gain some of its lost territories in exchange of helping the Germans. As Maurice Negre was arrested on charges of espionage and sentenced to 10 years in prison, Maria Tănase tried to help him by all means. In 1941, he was finally sent to France, but the two no longer had the opportunity to reunite[1]. People say that the price of his release included the promise of further services to the Romanian Intelligence Secret Service.

In 1941, Maria Tănase was invited to sing in Taxim theatre for 60 days (www.stelian-tanase.ro/maria-tanase-la-istanbul/). But beyond promoting Romanian songs abroad, her interests were more insidious – she had the mission to liaise with the residents of British espionage, a difficult task especially because it was in opposition with the Turkish policy of neutrality. There she secretly met with Alfred de Chastelain, whom he had known from Romania, where he worked as a professor at the University of Bucharest. Although he proposed her to leave Romania, she refused and returned home where she was accused of cooperation with the British spy network and arrested.

Finally, she was released for lack of evidence. The historian Cristian Troncotă confirmed this piece of information and declared that the famous

singer helped Eugen Cristescu, in a rather difficult period, with exchanges of information with a number of the Americans diplomats.

Concrete information about the singer informative activities are also included in her file from the Security, issued in June 1959 and labeled as "Top Secret". After the war, Maria Tănase was considered an enemy of the communist regime, but she was only kept under observation, as Security was aware that Maria Tănase had polarized public admiration and support. Because even some of the communist authorities were fascinated by her voice and tried to reward her in different ways, she received the State Prize (1955), the title of Honored Artist (1957), and a year later played an important role in the movie "Ciulinii Bărăganului".

## 3. CONCLUSIONS

Safeguarding national security is achieved on various fronts and it needs its best citizens. Intelligence volunteer has its own concept history in western intelligence literature; still the extent to which individuals agree to engage in such activities is determined by various factors. From the previous paragraphs it follows that successful musicians who travel the world and relates to the different environments, are extremely attractive to the intelligence services. These people have the ability to understand the stakes of these activities, the risks they may face, the difficulty to manage derived situations, but also the huge benefits for national security. Their specific traits determine them to fully involved in activities that only scale personalities are able to understand and assume.

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[1] The ingratitude manifested by Maurice Negre may be considered an argument for the hypothesis he was infiltrated next to her, not necessary being in love – having difficulties with the communist regime after the war, Maria Tănase wrote him several letters asking for a help that never came in spite of his important position in the French administration.

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