

The Lindström Project:
Lindström in the Baltic

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The Lindström Project

- The Lindström Project is an international project which aims to document the history of Carl Lindström AG (1904-1972), the German multinational record company which was a market leader in many European countries
- The project is organised by Gesellschaft für historische Tonträger (Society for historical recordings), Vienna
- Partners in Germany, Austria, Switzerland, UK, Czechoslovakia, Serbia, Portugal, Argentina, and the Scandinavian countries
- The first project report was published this year by GHT

Why study record companies ?

- The record industry documented a huge amount of music already during the first half of the 20th century
- Sound archives came too late. Much of this production is now lost, or incompletely documented. Surviving records are scattered all over the world
- We do not even know what we have lost, until we know more about the history of the recording industry...
- Most records before 1950 were produced by a relatively small number of multinational companies. Most of their archives have been lost, but their activities can be reconstructed on the basis of many sources

How catalogue and matrix numbers help us date records ?

Example: Odeon Hf 1- Finnish series (1920-1943)

- 554-610 Helsinki 1934
- 565-569 Stockholm ? 20.3.1934 (£ sign in wax)
- 570-610 Helsinki 1934
- 611-620 Stockholm 1934 (Malmsten & Arne Hülphers)
- 621-651 Helsinki early 1935
- 652-662 Berlin 28.6.1935 (Malmsten)
- 663-741 Helsinki autumn 1935
- 742-755 Berlin 5.8.1936 (Malmsten)
- 756-801 Helsinki autumn 1936
- 802-803 Berlin 6.4.1937
- 804-845 Helsinki 1937
- 846-862 Berlin 17.8.1937 (Malmsten)
- 863-972 Helsinki, probably October-November 1937
- 973-1019 Helsinki 1938 (incl. orchestra and organ recordings)
- 1020-1032 Berlin 23.8.1938 (Malmsten)
- 1033-1040 Berlin 27.8.1938 (Malmsten)
- 1041-1057 Stockholm? September? 1938 (Malmsten)
- 1058-1147 Helsinki, probably November 1938 (1116-7 = 30.11.1938)

Only the Berlin recording books survive, they help us to date some sessions

Carl Lindström AG: a chronology

- Founded in Berlin in 1904 by Swedish inventor Carl Lindström, who soon lost the company to Max Straus and Heinrich Zunz
- 1904-1910 successful gramophone manufacturer
- 1910-1913 acquires several existing record companies (Odeon, Fonotipia, Beka, Favorite, Lyrophon, Dacapo)
- 1910-1925 major record company on five continents, main labels Beka, Odeon, Parlophon, Jumbo. Branches in most European countries
- 1925-1931 partnership with Columbia Graphophone Co. Acquires Homocord and Pathe labels
- 1931-1972 part of EMI Ltd

Lindström's Baltic matrix series

- **Odeon**
 - Li 1 Lithuanian (recorded in Berlin 1928-31)
 - Re 1 Estonian (Berlin 1928-36)
 - Ri 1 Latvian (Berlin, Riga? 1927-33)
- **Parlophon-Beka**
 - 86000 Estonian (Tallin / Berlin 1923-31)
 - 87000 , 2-87000 Latvian (Riga / Berlin 1928-1931)
 - 87500, 2-87500 Lithuanian (Berlin 1928)
- **Homocord**
 - H-64000 Latvian (Riga ? Late 1920s?)
- **Columbia ?**
- **Favorite, Lyrophon & other "pre-Lindström" companies?**

Lindström agents in the Baltic

- Lindström had competing agents for various labels in each country. Only the Odeon agents in the Baltic have been identified
- Estonia: Eesto-Muusika, Tallin
- Latvia: Rigaer Musikhaus, Riga
- Lithuania: Karvelis & Rinkevicius, Kaunas
- Who were the Parlophon and Homocord agents?

Missing pieces...

- Copy surviving paper documents at EMI Germany (done...)
- Identify surviving Lindström recordings in Baltic collections: Odeon, Parlophon, Beka, Homocord, Columbia, Favorite etc
- Background of artists and repertoire
- Locate printed sources: record company catalogues, newspaper ads, news reports, references in books
- Locate private documents: correspondence, contracts etc
- Interview persons still living
- Etc

Impossible - you say that everything was destroyed during the war and occupations... here you see 200,000 records buried...

(photo: Milan Milovanovic collection)



You saw the ruins of the Lindström agency in Belgrad, 1942 – this is how it had looked in happier days



But our project was able to locate the family of the former owner, who had saved invaluable papers from the 1930s...

И најмање је
дете весело,
кад слуша плочу
„ОДЕОН“

КАТАЛОГ
ГРАМОФОНА
И
ПЛОЧА

ОДЕОН - ОДЕОН
за год. 1939 за год.

ИЛИЋ и АНДРЕЈЕВИЋ, БЕОГРАД
улица Милорада Драшковића (Сремска) број 7
Поштански факс број 440 — Телефон број 22780
Адреса за депешне довољња: ОДЕОН БЕОГРАД
ИЛИЋ и АНДРЕЈЕВИЋ, БЕОГРАД
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Штампа В. Димитријевић — Скопље

And even a photo of a recording session in Berlin in 1927...
similar documents must exist somewhere in the Baltic...



We also need to know more about the competition

The other major multinational company in the Baltic was **Gramophone** Co. / EMI. The recordings of this company have (mostly) been documented, and many survive at the EMI Music Archives, but at the moment access is very limited

There were also independent record companies in the region, particularly **Bellaccord** (Riga), which exported recordings to Estonia, Finland etc. A history and discography of this company is needed

Lithuanian recordings in the Polish national discography?

Lithuanian-American records in Spottswood's Ethnic records discography

Thank you!

- More information on the Lindström project at www.phonomuseum.at
- Welcome to the next Lindström project meeting in Hildesheim, Germany, May 2010
- Contacts: pekka.gronow@artiemusic.com