



Fig. 43. Disc from 1946 with different label colors



Fig. 44. Disc from 1946 with different label colors

In 1947, recording began again, however, because there was still no recording studio in Warsaw, the recordings were made in Poznań, in the studio of the Mewa plant. These recordings received matrix numbers from Wa 1 upwards. They should not be confused with numbers from XWa 1 upwards used in the 20's. They can be identified by the fact that in the 1920s the numbers in the mirror of the disc were handwritten and pertained to 30cm records. The postwar records were 25 cm, the numbers were font-stamped and the catalog numbers were from N 46001 upwards.

In 1948 Odeon was nationalized. Its activity continued under the Muza label, which for many years became the only record company in communist Poland.

Many thanks to Jarosław Wojciechowski for providing some of the illustrations.



Fig. 45. Label of last series of Odeon from 1947

Different Sounds of the War

The First World War and the Hungarian Recording History

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The centenary of the First World War gives an opportunity to discuss or even to re-evaluate the sources connected to the Great War.¹ In the case of the Hungarian recording history, this centenary also expects us to reveal the audio heritage of the war years. Since this topic is almost unexplored, discological investigation of Hungarian sound recordings made during the First World War opens up an extremely wide area to further sociological, historical, or musicological research.

Recently a great number of studies have been published on the connections between the recording history and the First World War both in English and in German,² including the fascinating volume *Wars, Dictators and the Gramophone* by Eric Charles Blake,³ Peter Martland's *The British Record Industry During the First World War*⁴ and the CD publication with a detailed booklet entitled *Und die Kugel macht bum bum. Humoristische Lieder, Propagandaufnahmen und Märsche aus der Zeit des Ersten Weltkriegs*.⁵ Hungarian discological publications have only dealt with this period sporadically.⁶ Yet on the basis of these writings it can be concluded that the First World War ruined the young and emerging Hungarian gramophone industry, since the first independent Hungarian gramophone firm went bankrupt and there was no further substantive recording activity in Hungary until the second half of the 1920s.

This article is the first attempt to reveal the Hungarian recording history during the years of the First World War for an international audience.⁷ Its method can be defined as discological,⁸ and considers its sources – the commercial gramophone discs – both as artefacts and sounding recollections of the impact of history on the urban mass culture. As I have only surveyed the activity of the biggest companies – The Gramophone Company, Lindström AG (BeKa/Diadal and Favorite labels), Columbia Records, and Első Magyar Hanglemezgyár the First Hungarian Gramophone Factory – further research is needed.

1. The Hungarian recording industry in 1914

In 1914, there was a flourishing gramophone industry in Budapest. In the first decade of the twentieth century all of the major recording firms – The Gramophone Company, Pathé, Columbia and the pre-Lindström-labels – published Hungarian discs, mostly in separate catalogue blocks reserved for Hungarian or Austro-Hungarian recordings. There was also an independent Hungarian recording firm, founded in 1908: the Első Magyar Hanglemezgyár [First Hungarian Recording Factory], with the labels Premier and Special. The latter label was used from July 1912, obviously because of distribution on the international market.⁹ The complete catalogue of the Első Magyar Hanglemezgyár included at least 4,400 numbers. I suspect there was a connection between the Hungarian, “gypsy girl with violin” and the Austrian “black” Premier labels, but this connection has not yet been revealed. Two specialized journals were published monthly for the Hungarian gramophone owners, the *Zenekereskedelmi Közlöny* [Music Trade Bulletin] and the *Magyar Hanglemez Újság* [Hungarian Gramophone Disc Journal].

However, unlike the German and English gramophone periodicals such as *Phonographische Zeitschrift*, *The Voice*, *Talking Machine News* or *Talking Machine World*, both Hungarian journals ceased production when the war broke out. The last number of the *Zenekereskedelmi Közlöny* was published in July 1914. The *Magyar Hanglemez Újság*, which was considered to be the journal of the First Hungarian Gramophone Factory, did not come out on 15 July. Nonetheless, the firm made recordings after the outbreak of the First World War.

There is a gap in the series of the matrix numbers of that company immediately before the recordings made during the war.

Matr. nr.	recordings
12404 – 12451	Recordings made in Pančevo (Панчево)
12456 – 12466	Recordings made in Budapest
12468 – 12472	Cabaret songs, sung by Josef Brandstätter
12474 – 12598	???
12600 – 12620	Hungarian recordings, made in Budapest, after the outbreak of the War

Table 1. Recordings of the *Első Magyar Hanglemezgyár* (May–September 1914)

The matrix number of the last known pre-war recording is 12472, while the first recording connected to the war has the matrix number 12600. It does not necessarily follow that the missing 128 numbers were issues that are unknown today, perhaps they were not published. But it is also possible that, as an artifice, the firm launched a new matrix series for the war recordings, beginning with the number 12,600. Only 19 such recordings are known from the First Hungarian Gramophone Factory, all of which were made in late August or in September 1914. The repertoire is similar to that of all countries involved in the war. In Hungary, the gramophone owners could buy the Hungarian and Austrian national anthems, military marches and patriotic songs.¹⁰

Matr. nr.	Title	Performer(s)
12600–12601	<i>Rákóczi</i> march	[unknown]
	<i>Klapka</i> march	[unknown]
12602–12603	<i>Radetzky Marsch</i>	[unknown]
	<i>Prinz Eugen Marsch</i>	[unknown]
12604	<i>Gott erhalte, Deutschland über Alles. Heil dir im Siegeskranz.</i>	Military band with choir
12605	<i>Die Wacht am Rhein</i>	Military band with choir
12606	Hungarian National Anthem	Military band
12607	<i>Ima a táborban</i> [Prayer in the camp]	Military band
12608–12609	<i>Ferenc Józsa azt izente</i> [Franz Joseph send a message]	[unknown]
	<i>Ferenc Józsa nem mehet a táborba</i> [Franz Joseph can not go to the camp]	[unknown]
12610–12611	<i>József főherceg megzemléli a hadba induló csapatokat</i> [Archduke Joseph visits the army]	[unknown]
	<i>Auffenberg Marsch</i>	[unknown]

12612	<i>Drágám így kellett lenni</i> [Honey, that's how it had to be]	Ernő Király and gypsy orchestra
12613	<i>Kard és rózsza</i> [Sword and Rose]	Ernő Király and gypsy orchestra
12614	<i>Megpróbáltam nálad nélkül élni</i> [I tried to live without you]	Ernő Király and gypsy orchestra
12615	<i>Mintha piros rózsza eső hullana az égből</i> [As if rain of red roses would fall from the heaven]	Ernő Király and gypsy orchestra
12616	<i>Megállj, megállj, kutya Szerbia!</i> [Just you wait, naughty Serbia]	Ernő Király and gypsy orchestra
12617	[unknown]	[unknown]
12618	[unknown]	[unknown]
12619	<i>Indulnak a honvédek</i> [The army is leaving]	Aurél Göndör and his ensemble
12620	<i>Megállj, megállj, kutya Szerbia! Illusztrált felvétel</i> [Just you wait, naughty Serbia. Illustrated recording]	Aurél Göndör and his ensemble

Table 2. The recordings of the *Első Magyar Hanglemezgyár* (Special Record) made in August/September 1914

The First Hungarian Gramophone Factory became one of the first victims of the Great War in Hungary. Evidence of the shortage of raw materials can be seen in the black (rather than the former gold) lettering on the wartime labels.¹¹ (See the label scans at the end of the article.) Contrary to the employees of The Gramophone Company in London – for whom it was not obligatory to join the voluntary British army¹² –, the workers of the Hungarian gramophone company could not escape from the mobilization orders, decreed on 31 July. The company went bankrupt soon after, and its liquidation began in 1915.¹³

2. Dating of the Hungarian recordings made after August 1914

The Hungarian recording industry was in a difficult situation by August 1914. Besides the First Hungarian Gramophone Factory, the Eufon Ltd. – a smaller Hungarian company for distributing gramophones without funnel and for publishing gramophone discs on several labels – was also ruined by the First World War.¹⁴ In the discography of the Hungarian BeKa recordings published on the “Diadal” label, one can read that the company ceased its activity at the outbreak of the War¹⁵ and later Hungarian discological literature discusses the Hungarian recording history only until 1914, which suggests that

the recording activity was stopped in August 1914.¹⁶

In fact, foreign recording companies made Hungarian recordings after August 1914 partly in Hungary and partly abroad. These recordings have not been discussed in the literature because of the inaccessibility of the existing sources and the difficulties of dating them. And it is obvious that the World War can be blamed for the missing sources. For example, according to Alan Kelly's research in the former EMI Archives, it was from August 1914 that the weekly and monthly reports of The Gramophone Company's national branches did not arrive at the London Head Office, and the missing data had to be refilled afterwards.¹⁷ Even so the case of the Hungarian recordings of The Gramophone Company is very fortunate, as we can date them on the basis of the HMV Discography of Alan Kelly. The perished recording ledgers of the other companies can only be reconstructed backwards, on the basis of the surviving discs. Unfortunately, the accurate recording dates of these discs are unknown, which is a great problem as the response time of the gramophone industry during the war could only be discussed based upon these dates. Moreover, as the foreign companies sent recording experts to Hungary only from time to time, we cannot speak about a continuous recording activity. However, on the basis of the content of the recordings and with the help of the events during the war years we can determine the *terminus post quem* of some of the recordings and the matrix numbers of these recordings can help in dating further, intermediate recordings.

The 58000–58999 block of matrix numbers by the BeKa company is puzzlingly confused.¹⁸ It contains Hungarian recordings, but the chronology is inverted: the series began on the spring of 1912 with the number 58500 – as a continuation of the 53000–53499 block –, and when they reached 58999, they turned back to 58000. That is why the recordings made after 1914 are to be found at the beginning of the 58000 series, but the 58500–58999 block still contains pre-war recordings.¹⁹ This explains why, despite the order of the matrix numbers, the recording titled *Mozi felvevő* [Movie Maker] by Dezső Gyárfás (matr. 58992–58993) was followed shortly by its own parody, *Háborus mozi felvevő* [Wartime Movie Maker] (matr. 58053–58054). War is in evidence on both recordings: Gyárfás, playing a movie maker, jokes during spring 1914 concerning on the Balkan war, and then during autumn 1914 on the World War. The jokes are as follows: in the Balkan war his leg was taken off by a cannon ball – fortunately, another cannon ball brought it back; in the World War his head was taken off by a cannon ball, but he received an unhitchable “substitute-head”. (See the label scans at the end of the article.)

The first recording session arranged shortly after the mid-August of 1914 by the BeKa company contained four cabaret songs, sung by the Hungarian female singer Hermin Solti (1887–1966).

Matr. nr.	Title	Performer
58043	<i>A semmeringi quartet</i> [The quartet from Semmering]	Hermin Solti
58044	<i>Csókolom a szíved csücskét</i> [I kiss your heart]	Hermin Solti
58045	<i>Mamuska kuplé</i> [Mommy couplets]	Hermin Solti
58046	<i>Francia-angol-orosz utánzatok</i> [French-Russian-English imitations]	Hermin Solti
58047–58056	Cabaret scenes connected to the war	Dezső Gyárfás
58057–58071	War songs	Mihály Sárosi

Table 3. The first BeKa (*Diadal*) recordings after August 1914

The first three are conventional couplets but the last, titled *Francia-angol-orosz utánzatok* [French, English and Russian imitations] contains obvious allusions to the World War. After a short spoken introduction Solti sings three strophes about her fictive experiences on the French, English and Russian fronts. The fact that both England and France are mentioned as enemies of the Monarchy shows that the recording must have been made after 12 August, 1914, the date of the declaration of the war between these countries and Hungary.

The solo cabaret scene titled *A bersaglieri* [The bersaglieri] (Diadal D 1444) was recorded after June 1915 because the Italian footmen called *bersaglieri* appear as soldiers of the enemy and the river Isonzo is also mentioned in the text of this recording.²⁰ (See the label scans at the end of the article.) The date is verified by the recording of the cabaret scene titled *Mister Neutral*, which, according to the matrix numbers, was recorded at the same recording session.²¹ In that recording, a war correspondent of the neutral USA talks with the Russian Tsar about the events in Lemberg and Przemyśl.

Similarly, history helps in the dating of the Favorite recording of a Hungarian folk-inspired art song – *magyarnóta* – which was composed on the occasion of the coronation of Charles I of Austria or Charles IV of Hungary (30 December, 1916).²² As the almost friendly spirit of the text shows, the fact that a new

king had been crowned might have given a new hope to the Hungarian people. In the refrain the departed Franz Joseph looks down from Heaven and follows the life of his successor, saying "My son, Carl, remain loyal to the good Hungarian people! As I have become Jóska [Hungarian nickname of Joseph], one day you will become öreg Karcsi [Old Charlie]." Finally, in the couplets *A népfelkelő* [The volunteer] the battle of Tarnopol, which was in August 1917, is mentioned.²³

As operetta excerpts were usually very quickly recorded and formed a very important part of the early gramophone repertoire, the history of operetta gives us great help in determining the date of some sound recordings. The operetta recordings, compared to the Hungarian premieres of the operettas, show how long the foreign recording companies could be active in Hungary during the war years.

Looking at the table, it is striking that not only the German and Austrian companies could continue their Hungarian recordings but also the English Gramophone Company and the American Columbia Records. Although they were companies of hostile countries, both of them published Hungarian recordings between 1914 and 1918. A great part of these recordings were not made in Hungary. The Hungarian recordings of The Gramophone Company were made in 1915 in Berlin, then in 1916 and 1917 in New York,²⁵ which is why the contemporary Hungarian operetta hits are missing from them. Columbia Records made Hungarian recordings in parallel in Budapest and in the USA.²⁶ And, not surprisingly, while patriotic recordings were produced in Berlin (for example, the song *Áldassék a király* [Blessed be the King] in 1915 with a unique label)²⁷ the repertoire of the recordings made in English speaking countries is much less warlike. The American Hungarian gramophone repertoire between 1915 and 1918 consists mainly of recordings of Hungarian songs, couplets and religious songs.

See my article in the Volume 7 of the publications of the GHT: „From Church Hymns to the »Church Scene«. Religious Songs on Hungarian Gramophone Records (1900–1920)” in: Pekka Gronow – Christiane Hofer – Frank Wonneberg (eds.): *Contributions to the History of the Record Industry. Beiträge zur Geschichte der Schallplattenindustrie*. Vol. 7 (Wien: Gesellschaft für Historische Tonträger, 2016): 164–172.

Table 4. Hungarian premieres and recordings of operettas during the First World War (selection)

	Premiere in Budapest	EMH (Special)	Beka (Diadal)	Favorite	Gramophone Co.	Columbia
Jacobi: <i>Sybill</i>	27.02.1914	11943-11946	58979	[?]	15639L-15641L	68126–27
Lehár: <i>Endlich allein</i>	20.02.1915	-	[?]	[?]	-	68174
Kálmán: <i>Zsuzsi kisasszony</i>	27.02.1915	-	58069	15580-15583	-	68370
O. Straus: <i>Rund um die Liebe</i>	22.09.1915	-	58091	15596, 15598	-	68402
Szirmai: <i>Mágnás Miska</i>	12.02.1916	-	58117-58118	15645-15651	-	68482, 68485
Berté: <i>Dreimäderlhaus</i>	23.04.1916	-	58111-58112	15743-15750	-	[n.a.]
Kálmán: <i>Die Csárdásfürstin</i>	03.11.1916	-	-	15873-tól	-	68547-68552
Fall: <i>Die Rose von Stambul</i>	27.06.1917	-	-	15942-15945	-	68613-68619
Lehár: <i>Wo die Lerche singt</i>	01.02.1918	-	-	15980-15982	-	68675-76
Szirmai: <i>Gróf Rinaldo</i>	07.11.1918	-	-	-	-	68686-87

3. Comic performances and comic performers

In the next part of the article the changes of the attitude towards the War will be demonstrated, from the initial enthusiasm through exalted patriotism to the longing for peace and the homecoming of the soldiers. It is striking that all of these feelings can be detected on the early Hungarian cabaret recordings.²⁸ It is superfluous to take any psychoanalytic approach, but, very simply stated, cabaret scenes and humorous couples served as a distraction from the war, by mocking and understating it, or laughing at it. Already in September 1914 the seriousness of the war was understated with humorous recordings, and the fact that such recordings were made even in 1917 and 1918 indicates that the popularity of these recordings did not decrease during the war years. As is common with other countries' humoristic recordings, there are two genres in this group: cabaret songs (couplets) with piano or orchestra accompaniment and sometimes with a choir in the refrains, and spoken recordings (cabaret scenes) with or without a musical frame, which can be a strophe of a couplet.

The most common type of humour was often untranslatable word-plays. As most of the comic performers were Jewish artists, their word-plays frequently included Yiddish words, making it more difficult to understand them today, not to mention translating them. Generally, the subject of the joke varies in these recordings. A hostile country, a soldier of the enemy, a Hungarian soldier or even the people in the hinterland could be mocked. Interestingly, the music is very rarely parodied. A rare exception is the couplets *French, English and Russian imitations*, mentioned above. Not only the text but also the music of the three strophes sung about the fictive experiences on the French, English and Russian fronts caricatures the hostile countries. The jokes in the text are untranslatable, mainly word-jokes on how the foreign languages sound and on the names of politicians, such as Raymond Poincaré and René Viviani. The music parodies some stereotypes of French, Russian and English music. The French strophe is a light and fast march, the Russian is a slower, pseudo-rustic dance, and the English is a comfortable dance in even time signature, a kind of early Foxtrot.

3.1. Mocking the enemy

Mocking the enemy was very widespread at the beginning of the war. The Hungarian equivalent of the internationally well-known *Rosa, wir fahren nach Lodz*²⁹ was a similar song with an aggressive nationalistic gesture in its title: *Megállj, kutya Szerbia* ["Just you wait, you naughty Serbia!"].³⁰ In spite of the weird title, the song was mainly intended to recruit soldiers and mobilize the patriotic feelings of the Hungarian

people. It was the most popular song in Hungary in the first days of the First World War, and was recorded in two different versions by the Első Magyar Hanglemezygár as well as in a third version by Favorite Records. (See the label scans at the end of the article.)

Company and label	catalogue and matr. nr.	performers
El-ső Ma-gyar Hang-le-mez-gyár (Special Record)	12616	Ernő Király and Gypsy Orchestra
Első Magyar Hanglemezygár (Special Record)	12620	Aurél Göndör and his ensemble
Favorite Record	1-025594 (matr. 168)	Károly Újváry and Rudi Nyári's Gypsy Orchestra

Table 5. Recordings of *Megállj, megállj, kutya Szerbia* [Just you wait, naughty Serbia]

Its performers were the most well-known Hungarian gramophone stars: Ernő Király (1884–1954), Károly Újváry (1856–1918) and the ensemble of Aurél Göndör (1869–1917). The recording by the latter is a real rarity because Aurél Göndör and his ensemble usually performed comic scenes, but in this case they used very few comic elements and gave a frame, a kind of audio play, to the patriotic song. This song disappeared from the gramophone repertoire soon after the first months of the World War. It lost its popularity immediately after the Hungarian people recognized that the war would not end "before the leaves fell". In 1918 the Hungarian poet Dezső Kosztolányi mentioned this song as "the first, shameful song of the war."³¹

The mocking became more and more bitter during the war. Italy's entering the war shocked the Hungarian people so much that the performer, Jenő Virág, in his solo scene titled *A besaglieri* mocks not only the Italian soldier but also the Italian culture, stating, for example, that the Italian bombs are filled with the poems of Gabriele d'Annunzio. However, this kind of exaggerated style of mocking was also used in Italy. The Italian comic scene, titled *Cecco Beppe all'inferno* [Franz Joseph in Hell], presented the Habsburg emperor in Hell among damned souls and talking with the devil.³²

3.2. Irony, self-derision

Another segment of the irony can be identified with the help of a recording titled *Csukaszürke ember* [Man in field gray], which refers to the colour of the military uniform of the

Habsburg Empire, known in German as “Feldgrau”.³³ (See the label scans at the end of the article.) It is a spoken recording by Dezső Gyárfás (1882–1921) which begins with a strophe of a couplet, and was recorded on two sides of a disc in or somewhat after August 1914 by the BeKa Company. The sung verse is a parody of *Yip-I-Addy-I-Ay* by Bob Roberts (known as *Hupf mein Mädel* in German or *Ujjé, a Ligetbe’ nagyszerű* in Hungarian). The only character of the scene is an older Jew, who makes comments on the war. In the text of the sung strophe he repeats the patriotic and enthusiastic phrases which were common at the beginning of the war. But in his spoken text, he is rather sceptical. He says: “If all of us have to go, well, we will go” – in spite of the fact that he was thrown out fifty years earlier at the recruiting. He prepares himself for the life of a soldier in a very “urban” way: he sleeps out of doors, that is, in the light well, and all of his clothes are field gray, even his “white” shirt. As he says: “it took four weeks for it to become field gray.”

The performer of the scene makes several jokes about the enemy, for example in his “wartime menu” which contains “Russian pickled herring (of course, without its head), Serbian sirloin steak, English tenderloin (still oozing blood)” etc. However, the end of the recording is rather sceptical again, saying “it’s high time the war ended, but there’s more to come and it won’t be pretty”. And the strong scepticism can be felt also in the intonation of his closing words: “Thanks to God, we’re fine *von Beruf*. If it continues like this, we will soon be dancing in St-Petersburg. See you in Moscow!”

The word-jokes of Gyárfás are mostly untranslatable, as he often exchanges common words for Jewish terms. He also parodies the language of the wartime news using fictive names of countries and nations, mainly with Jewish allusions. From his talk it is clear that the people paid close attention to the news about the warfare already at the beginning of the war. Wartime news and media are also present in another cabaret scene of Gyárfás, titled *Háborus mozi felvétel* [Wartime Movie Maker], mentioned above. In this recording he presents pictures from the war, obviously in a humorous manner.

Joking about the field grey uniform of the Austro-Hungarian Joint Army shows the attitude of a part of the Hungarian people to the dual monarchy. In the Austrian part of the Monarchy, this uniform evoked a different kind of patriotic feeling which can also be discussed through early sound recordings. The song *Die graue Felduniform* by Walter Kollo was recorded at least twice, for the first time in 1914 and later in 1915.³⁴ Though Paul Mahringer claims that the text of this song is more atrocious than that of the song titled *Rosa, wir fahren*

nach Lodz,³⁵ it is a rather soul-stirring song which almost beckons people to the army. There is neither scepticism nor mocking in its text. In contrast, the Hungarian *Man in Field Gray* is a humorous spoken solo with characteristic Jewish self-deprecating humour and appreciable scepticism of the war.

3.3. Exalted patriotism, longing for peace and the homecoming of soldiers.

Exalted intonation is very hard to incorporate into comic scenes. It still occurred in the third year of the First World War. The two-part recording titled *Majd ha a fiúk hazajönnek* [When the boys come home] was made in the autumn of 1917.³⁶ Its genre is an audio play (*Hörspiel*), rather than a comic scene. We can assume that audio plays were extraordinary popular, partly because of the number of the surviving discs, and partly because, although the recording costs of these recordings had to be very high compared to that of a solo cabaret scene, the recording companies published new audio plays regularly during the war years. The performers of this particular recording are three of the most popular Hungarian gramophone stars, the operetta *bon vivant* Ernő Király, his wife, the operetta actress Hermin Solti and the comedian Dezső Gyárfás, here teamed up for the first time, and accompanied by a military band and a gypsy orchestra. The scene is an imaginary story which takes place after the end of the war. Király plays a homecoming soldier, whose wife is waiting for him, and Gyárfás portrays an older Jewish tradesman who woos the lady in a humorous manner. The comic scenes – the procession of the soldiers with military music in the background and the festivities in the *Városliget* [City park] accompanied by a gypsy orchestra – are suddenly interrupted at the end of the second side of the disc, and Ernő Király makes a highly exalted comment while the Hungarian national anthem is being played: “This is how we imagine the first joyous hours of the peaceful reunion. [...] This day is urged in all of our prayers. When our only wish comes true, when our lovely boys come home.” It seems, that at that time the victory was not as important as the homecoming of the soldiers.

This kind of exalted intonation can be detected mainly on audio plays. But the homecoming of the soldiers was the common topic of a series of couplets of Géza Steinhardt (1873–1944) too, recorded at the turn of 1917 and 1918.

Table 6. The parody recordings of Géza Steinhardt on Favorite discs (1917-1918)

Matr. nr.	Title of the parody	Original song
15956	<i>Igy kívánja az én feleségem</i> [My wife wishes that way]	Weiner István: <i>A muszkákat bogyan dolgoztassam</i> [How should I work the Russian war prisoners]
15957	<i>Irigylem az Abelesz Mór</i> [I envy Mór Abelesz]	Béla Zerkovitz: <i>Irigylem a kannibál nőt</i> [I envy the cannibal woman]
15958	<i>A népfelkelő</i> [The volunteer]	Irving Berlin: <i>Alexander's Ragtime Band</i>
15959	<i>Sír a kislány a Balaton partján</i> [The girl is crying at Lake Balaton]	Hungarian folk inspired art song with the same title
15960	<i>Mamuska, mamuska</i> [Mommy]	István Weiner: <i>Mamuska</i> [Mommy]
15961	<i>Az én dadám</i> [My Nanny]	Béla Zerkovitz: <i>Az én babám</i> [My baby]
15962	<i>Steinhardt mulat I</i> [Steinhardt has fun, part I]	Hungarian folk inspired art songs
15963	<i>Steinhardt mulat II</i> [Steinhardt has fun, part II]	Hungarian folk inspired art songs

Steinhardt was also a Jewish artist but, while Jewishness also influenced his texts, erotic allusions were maybe more important for his jokes. Surprisingly, however, while the texts of these couplets often operate with erotic allusions, their stories are imbued with the thought of the homecoming of the soldiers. The protagonists are soldiers who do not want to be involved in the war at all: a soldier is envious of the merchant who had the opportunity to stay in Budapest.³⁷ Another soldier is sad because his leave has ended and he has to depart from his lover and return to the front.³⁸ A third soldier comes home unexpectedly and finds a man in the wardrobe of his wife – and, surprisingly, the woman even congratulates her husband, saying (or, in fact, singing), that this man “had disappeared on the

battlefield, he was marked in the loss list. My dear, you did a good turn for the Fatherland: a soldier had disappeared and you have found him!”³⁹

Most of these couplets are musical parodies as well. Their melodies are well-known songs, not necessarily couplets or cabaret songs, but occasionally Hungarian folk-inspired art songs or even hits from operettas. Only the text is new, applied to the current situation, that is, the World War. It is surprising, however, that in the case of the last mentioned song, *Mamuska, mamuska*, not only the parody was a war couplet, but also the parodied song itself, recorded in the autumn of 1914, after the outbreak of the War.⁴⁰ In the original text the situation is almost the same, but is set still at the very beginning of the War: the husband goes home and finds a sword (and not a man) in his bedroom. In this earlier version his wife also tries to explain the situation: as the husband is being drafted, and he will very likely be called into the army, so she has already bought a sword for him...

Though the musical parody gives an opportunity to make a parody on the music itself, Steinhardt did not use that. Even in the case of *A népfelkelő*, which is the parody of *Alexander's Ragtime Band* by Irving Berlin, parody does not pertain to the music, only to the text. Although a parody of *Alexander's Ragtime Band* could be interpreted as a mockery of the country of the song's composer, Irving Berlin, either Russia or the USA, it is unrealistic because the song was known and very popular before the war as an insert piece sung in the Hungarian performances of the operetta *The Geisba* under the title “Medvetánc” [“Bear's Dance”].

As a short summary, we can say that the First World War had a large impact on the Hungarian recording industry, both on its history and repertoire. The impact of the war can be detected mainly on the spoken recordings, that is, on the cabaret scenes and audio plays. And this war, depicted by sound recordings, bears the traces of the urban wartime feelings of the Hungarian side of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy. Initially, the protagonists take the offensive, as the words of the *Wartime Movie Maker* shows: “When I see a Russky I try to get a good shot of his face and send it off to a white sheet.” It was in Hungary that war scepticism could be felt in the content of the recordings for the first time in Europe, already in 1915. In Hungary, the jokes became sharper and more sarcastic in 1915, and from 1917 on, the most frequent topic started to become the homecoming instead of the occupation.

The notion of “Waffenbrüderschaft” can only be detected at

the outbreak of the war, by the presence of the Austrian and German national songs among the last recordings of the First Hungarian Gramophone Factory. As the later recordings show, the Austro-Hungarian Joint Army was considered to be a real community only on the Austrian recordings. Franz Joseph was mentioned on Hungarian recordings only as “king” or “Hungarian king”; the soldiers on audio plays said “I will die for the king, for the homeland and for the liberty of Hungary.” In contrast, it is striking that in Austrian recordings the two parts of the Monarchy are frequently mentioned together, for example, at the end of the second part of the comic performance titled „Politische Briefe”.⁴¹ For another, much more interesting example, the Austrian pseudo-comic audio play titled *Schlacht in der Karpaten*⁴² compares the stereotypical heroism of the Austrian soldier and the Hungarian *Huszár*. When the Austrian soldier would like to escape into the trench, the *Huszár* says: “Honvédhúsar reit’ niemals nicht zurück” (“The huszar never recoils”). And at the end of the recording the following is sung: „Österreich und Ungarn, die kämpfen Hand in Hand. Die geben ihr Leben fürs teure Vaterland. Und wär’ von Feinden die ganze Welt zerfetzt, halt’ öst’ reich-ungarische Erd’ mit Eisen fest!” (“Austria and Hungary fight hand in hand. They give their lives for the dear fatherland. And if the enemy were to break up the world, the Austro-Hungarian land persists together with iron”). As history has proven, neither the unity of Austria and Hungary remained as immovable as the iron, nor the Hungarian “self-dependence” came into existence as had been expected during the First World War.

1 This article is a written version of a paper presented at the musicological conference titled „War of Media – Media of War: The Importance of Music and Media for Propaganda in Times of Change” (25–28 November, 2015, Wien, University of Music and Performing Arts). The Author is a research fellow at the Institute for Musicology (Research Centre for the Humanities, Hungarian Academy of Sciences) and lecturer at the Ferenc Liszt Music Academy in Budapest; he offers his thanks to Ms. Ágnes Lux for her help in the English Text.

2 For further investigation, see, among others, Pekka Gronow: „The First World War and its Consequences”, in: Pekka Gronow - Iipo Saunio: *An International History of the Recording Industry*, translated by Christopher Moseley (London, New York, Cassell, 1998): 28–29.; *Gramophone Records of the First World War. An HMV Catalogue 1914–1918*. Introduction: Brian Rust. (North Pomfret: David & Charles Inc., [without date]); Paul Mahringer: „Rosa, wir fahr’n nach Lodz”. Österreichischer Humor als Waffe im Ersten Weltkrieg”, *Zeitschrift Österreich. Sonderausgabe: Der erste Weltkrieg*. (2014): 92–95.

3 Eric Charles Blake: *Wars, Dictators and the Gramophone. 1898–1945*. (York: William Sessions Ltd., 2004).

4 Peter Martland: „The British Record Industry During the First World War: 1914–1918”, in: Martland: *Recording History. The British Record Industry, 1888–1931*. Lanham – Toronto – Plymouth: Scarecrow Press, 2013., 205–236. (referred as „Martland, Recording History”), see also Peter Martland: „Keeping the Home Fires Burning. The Gramophone Company, the Great War and Beyond”, in: Martland: *A Business History of the Gramophone Company Ltd. 1897–1918*. (PhD Dissertation, University of Cambridge, 1992): 414–466. (referred as „Martland, Diss.”).

5 „...und die Kugel macht bum bum!” Humoristische Lieder, Propagandaufnahmen und Märtsche aus der Zeit des Ersten Weltkriegs. 2 CD

([Wien]: Militaria, [2009]).

6 See, for example: Gábor Oldal: „Kis magyar gramofonológia. 5. Világviszály és fellendülés” [Little Hungarian Gramophonology, 5. World-wide crisis and uprising], *Gramofon* 1997/7, 6–7. Klára Bajnai – Géza Gábor Simon: *Képes magyar hanglemmez-történet. Hungarian Recording History in Pictures*. (Budapest: JOKA, 2012).

7 A more detailed article was published in Hungarian in the journal of the Hungarian Musicological Society, see: Szabó Ferenc János: „Magyar hangok a háborúból. Az első világháború és a magyar hanglemmez-történet” [„Hungarian voices” from the war. The first world war and the Hungarian Gramophone history] *Magyar Zene* LIII/3 (August 2015): 277–304.

8 The term „Discology” (in German: „Diskologie”) was used for the first time by Erich Valentin, see: Erich Valentin: „»Diskologie«. Wissenschaft von der Schallplatte”, *Musica Schallplatte* 4 (1961), Heft 3. 55–56. See also Martin Elste – Dietrich Schüller: „Tonträger und Tondokumente.” In: Finscher, Ludwig (ed.): *Die Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart. Zweite, neubearbeitete Ausgabe*. (Kassel: Bärenreiter, Stuttgart: Metzler, c1998): Sachtel 9. col. 646–678.

9 Garde: „Uj hanglemmezokről,” [About new discs] *Zenekerkeskedelmi Közöny* 2/7 (July 1912), 8. The new label was registered by the Első Magyar Hang-lemmezgyár R. T. on 15 May 1912, under the number 24538. See: *Központi Védjegy Értékesítő* [Central Trademark Bulletin] 1912. 1456.

10 At the outbreak of the World War, the British, French, Belgian and Russian national anthems, The Entente Cordiale March, the Namur March, Drake’s Drum, and Onward, Christian Soldiers were recorded and published on many gramophone discs. Eric Charles Blake gives a detailed analysis of the English recordings connected to the First World War, see Blake, 18.

11 I have seen only one exception, a Special disc with black inscription, but with pre-war content (matrix numbers 12395 and 12396), perhaps it was reissued after August 1914.

12 Only 14 employees of the The Gramophone Company joined to the volunteer army of Great Britain, see: Martland, Recording History, 207.

13 *Központi értesítő* [Central Bulletin], 1915/70, Date of the entry: 11 August 1915. According to Gábor Oldal, the firm ceased only in 1917, see: Oldal, 6.

14 Bajnai – Simon, 38.

15 Géza Gábor Simon: „Bevezető,” [Introduction] in: Klára Bajnai – Géza Gábor Simon – Tibor Borsos: *A „Diadal” Hanglemmezgyár története és diszkográfiája*. [The History and Discography of the „Diadal” Disc Factory] (Budapest: JOKA, 2010), XII.

16 See, for example, the articles by Tibor Molnár in the journal *Sztereó*, and the unpublished article by Enikő Veőreös, *A magyar hanglemmezgyártás története 1900–1920 között*. [The History of the Hungarian Disc Production between 1900 and 1920] (Manuscript, 1995. Institute for Musicology, RCH HAS): 5–11.

17 Alan Kelly: *The Gramophone Company Limited. His Master’s Voice. General Catalogue*. (CD-ROM, published by the author, 2000): Suf-L.doc, 693.

18 I used for the dates of the Beka/Diadal matrix numbers the researches of Klára Bajnai upon the advertisements published in *Zenekerkeskedelmi Közöny*, and the dates of Christian Zwarg.

19 As Christian Zwarg states, this inversion is not unique among the Austro-Hungarian matrix blocks of the BeKa company, see, for example, the 44000 block. I have to offer my thanks to Mr. Zwarg for his help in this question.

20 István Weiner: A bersaglieri. Performers: Jenő Virág and István Weiner. Diadal Record D 1444, matr. 58094–58095.

21 Albert Hetényi-Heidlberg – Zsolt Harsányi: Mister Neutral I-II. Performers: Dezső Gyárfás and Albert Hetényi-Heidlberg. Diadal Record D 1447, matr. 58102.

22 Náci Sas: Károly király, öreg Karcsi. [King Carl, Old Charlie] Performers: Károly Újváry, Gábor Kozák and his gypsy orchestra. Favorite Record 1-025664, matr. 15880.

23 Irving Berlin – István Weiner: A népfelkelő. Performer: Géza Steinhardt, with piano accompaniment. Favorite Record 1-27825, matr. 15958.

24 For example, the recordings from Leányvásár by Viktor Jacobi were made and published before the premiere of the operetta, see: [Anonymous]: „A Leányvásár”, *Zenekerkeskedelmi Közöny* 1/11 (November 1911): 11.

25 See the catalogues of Alan Kelly.

26 The matrix numbers of the Hungarian Columbia recordings made during the First World War are divided into three groups. The 40000 matrix numbers contain the Hungarian recordings made in the USA.

27 Zoltán Pap: Áldassék a király. Performer: Izsó Budai. The Gramophone Company 15-12875, matr. 17918L. The label was reproduced on the cover of the book *Képes magyar hanglemmez-történet*. See the label on the next page.

28 In this article I can not analyse the whole repertoire of the Hungarian recordings made during the First World War. Here I only refer to my article: „Gramofonlemez és kultúrmisszió a világháború éveiben – 1916” [Gramophone disc and cultural mission in the years of the World War – 1916], in: András Kappanyos (ed.): *E nagy vívmány. Tanulmányok 1916 mikro történelméről*. (Budapest: MTA Bölcsészettudományi Kutatóközpont, 2017): 261–272.

29 The song *Rosa, wir fahren nach Lodz* was also recorded in Hungarian, under the title *Rózsai gyermeink Lodzba*. Performed by Gábor Kozák’s gypsy orchestra. Diadal Record D 1442, matr. 58090.

30 About this song see, for example, Sándor Turnowsky: „A tömeg és természet” [The crowd and its nature], *Korunk*, January 1930, 1–10. Online: http://epa.oszk.hu/00400/00458/00250/1930_01_5069.html (downloaded on 5 November, 2014); Dénes Lengyel: „Az ősök nyomában” [In the aftermath of the ancestors], *Művelődés*, December 2007, online: <http://www.muvelodes.ro/index.php/Cikkek?id=479> (downloaded on 5 November, 2014); Dániel Szabó: „Katonadalok és az első világháború,” [Soldiers’ songs and the First World War] *Aetas* 2007/1, 44–62.

31 Dezső Kosztolányi: „Visszajáró dalok” [Revenant Songs], *Pesti Napló* 69/264 (10 November, 1918): 11.

32 Cecco Beppe all’inferno, Columbia Record E 2625, matr. 42326. See the fascinating article of Alessandro Argentini: „Historische Schallplatten-Aufnahmen sind eine wichtige Quelle der Erinnerung” in: Pekka Gronow – Christiane Hofer (eds.): *The Lindström Project. Contributions to the history of the record industry*. Vol. 3. (Wien: Gesellschaft für Historische Tonträger, 2010): 162–171.

33 Csukaszürke ember I-II [Man in Field Gray], performer: 30 Dezső Gyárfás. Diadal Record D 1423, matr. 58055–58056.

34 Walter Kollo: Die graue Felduniform. Performed by Max Kuttner. Gramophone Co. 522574, matr. 17177L (1914). The same song, performed by Jacques Rotter: Columbia Record D-7491, matr. 68426 (1915).

35 Mahringer, 94.

36 Majd ha a fiúk haza jönnek I-II. [When the Boys Come Home], performers: Hermin Solti, Ernő Király and Dezső Gyárfás. Columbia D-7600, matr. 68611–68612.

37 Béla Zerkovitz – István Weiner: Irigylem az Abelesz Mór! [I envy Mór Abelesz], performed by Géza Steinhardt with piano accompaniment. Favorite Record 1-27824, matr. 15957.

38 Weiner István: Az én dadám. Előadja Steinhardt Géza zongorakísérettel. Favorite Record 1-27828, matr. 15961. István Weiner: Az én dadám [My Nanny]. Performers by Géza Steinhardt, with piano accompaniment. Favorite Record 1-27828, matr. 15961

39 Weiner István: Mamuska, mamuska. Előadja Steinhardt Géza zongorakísérettel. Favorite Record 1-27827, matr. 15960. István Weiner: Mamuska, mamuska [Mommy]. Performers by Géza Steinhardt, with piano accompaniment. Favorite Record 1-27827, matr. 15960.

40 István Weiner: Mamuska. Performed by Hermin Solti with male choir, accompanied by the orchestra of the Royal Orféum. Diadal Record D 1418, matr. 58045.

41 Politische Briefe II. Performer: Richard Waldemar. Zonophon 18148,

matr. 17418L, recorded in 1915.

42 Schlacht in den Karpaten, Performed by the „Zonophon-Truppe”. Zonophon 18174, matr. 17479L, recorded in 1915.

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Chinese records on the Berliner

G&T and Gramophone labels (1887-1912)

DU JUN MIN

Berliner invents the Gramophone

Emile Berliner was born on May 20, 1851 in Hanover, Germany, and was the fourth of 11 children in the family. He came to the United States in 1870. In 1877, he invented the transmitter (microphone). In order to obtain the rights to the patent, Bell Telephone Company paid him \$50,000, and Berliner entered the Bell Telephone Company (1879-1884) to take charge of the production of the transmitter. Four years later, in the early summer of 1881, he returned to Germany for the first time. At that time, Bell's magneto telephone had entered Germany but was not yet widely used and was limited to various government departments, principally post offices. Siemens and Halske, the largest electric concern in Berlin at the time, was manufacturing an enlarged Bell magneto telephone which was used both as a receiver and a transmitter. Berliner saw a business opportunity and decided to introduce his invention, the telephone transmitter, into Germany for production.

Berliner had two younger brothers. The older, Jacob, was managing a small tannery, and the young Joseph was still serving his telephone apprenticeship in the United States. At the suggestion of Berliner, the brothers established the Telefon-Fabrik J. Berliner at Kniestraße 18, Hanover and officially registered it on August 3, 1881 for the production of telephone and accessories. Emile's idea was that Jacob should be the business manager of the enterprise while Joseph should attend to its technical development.

Berliner became an American citizen in 1883, and the following year he settled in Washington, D. C. and set up a small laboratory where he began research on the gramophone. On May 4, 1887, Berliner filed a patent with the Patent Office under the serial number of No.237,060, but it was not approved as it was considered to be similar to the earlier patent of Charles Cros. On September 26, he applied again and was approved by the Patent Office on November 8, with the patent number of 372.786. This was the most important invention of his life. Over the next few years, Berliner made several improvements to his invention, including the method of producing metal masters which could be used to duplicate the recorded sounds in large quantities.

The new invention now had to be turned into a commercial product. The first gramophone records in the world were manufactured in 1889 by the German company Kämmerer & Reinhardt. The large-scale exploitation of Berliner's invention in Europe started in 1898, when a group of British businessmen

entered into a license agreement with Berliner and founded the Gramophone Company in London. The company's first record factory was operated in Hanover by Emile's brother Joseph.

In the United States, Berliner first manufactured records under his own name, but on October 3, 1901, the Victor Talking Machine Company was founded to take over Berliner's patents. The managing director and principal shareholder of the new company was Eldridge Johnson, a former business associate of Berliner. Over the years, the Victor Company developed a close cooperation with the Gramophone Company. Berliner himself moved to Canada, where he established a successful record business.

In a few years' time, Emile Berliner's invention had given birth to an international industry. The first years of the record industry have already been studied widely, although many details still need to be studied. In this paper we shall briefly discuss the early development of the industry and then focus on the first Chinese recordings produced by Berliner and the Gramophone Company.

Grammophon-Fabrik Kämmer, Reinhardt & Co.

In 1889, Berliner had returned to Germany again and was heroically welcomed in his hometown of Hanover. This time he launched the production of gramophones and records, and achieved the transformation of his invention from the laboratory to the commercial market.

The company named Kämmer, Reinhardt & Co. had previously produced toys and small novelty objects. In the spring of 1890, Berliner granted them a license allowing the company to produce and sell talking dolls, gramophones and the relating records in Germany and provided the company with a small prototype.⁹ For this purpose, a new company called Grammophon-Fabrik Kämmer, Reinhardt & Co. (K&R) was founded in Waltershausen, Thuringia, eastern Germany.

The attempt proved premature, and by the mid-1890s K & R began to withdraw from the market. However, it is important to note that from the very beginning, Berliner and K & R envisioned the business in global terms. The records were recorded on one side and blank on the other and made of different materials such as celluloid, gutta-percha, vulcanized rubber and so on. The titles and contents of the 5-inch records were printed on small paper labels of different colors. These labels were attached to the reverse side of the record and the