

# *Paul Blumberg Requests: Musical Tastes in 1908 Smyrna*

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## **Abstract – Introduction**

The current year 2022 is symbolic as it marks the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Smyrna Catastrophe. The term refers to the events of the massacre of the Greek and Armenian population of Smyrna by the Kemalist army, as well as the burning of the city, which occurred in September 1922. This was the end of the Greek-Turkish war of 1919-1922, the flight of the Greek administration from Turkey where it had settled on the west coast of Asia Minor under the Treaty of Sevres<sup>1</sup>, as well as the almost erratic retreat of the Greek army after the collapse of the front and the general expulsion and extermination of much of the Greek and Christian population of Asia Minor.

This destruction began seven days after the withdrawal of the last Greek military unit from Asia Minor and after the entry of the Turkish army, Mustafa Kemal himself and his rioters in the city. The fire first broke out in the Armenian quarter and specifically from the explosion of the Armenian Church of Agios Nikolaos, where women and children had taken refuge and were besieged by the Turks. With the help of a wind favorable to the Turks (blowing against the Turkish quarter) and the gasoline with which the Turks sprinkled the houses, the fire burned the whole city, except the Muslim and Jewish quarters. It lasted from August 31<sup>st</sup> to September 4<sup>th</sup> (according to the old calendar). Today this anniversary is actually September 13<sup>th</sup>, as next year the new calendar was introduced in Greece.

There are innumerable historical sources and related books and papers on the destruction of Smyrna. However, the brilliant Smyrna of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup>, with its letters, trade and arts, still has many aspects of the previous life there to be illuminated through archives and contemporary documents. The research that unfolds in this text could not even have come to mind as an idea, if the beloved, tireless researcher and author Hugo Strötbaum had not shared with me the documents on which this paper is based.

In 1908, the merchant Paul Blumberg corresponded with the Gramophone Company in London about the gramophone products he wished to be sent to him for sale at his store in Smyrna. This correspondence was miraculously preserved at the EMI Music Archives. Copies of these letters are in the archive of Hugo Strötbaum, who shared them with me for this article: From these documents will emerge ways in which the archival documents and the archival material can be used as sources in the study of the history of music itself, but also of the music industry and discography, which are interrelated with the political and sociological data of the time in which they occur.

According to Jerome F. Weber<sup>2</sup>, the archives of record companies are one of the most valuable primary sources of record information, and catalogues and labels are secondary sources. In fact, this distinction is not so clear: the archives of the companies and record catalogues can reveal different historical and cultural aspects of recordings. Hugo Strötbaum has done admirable research and documentation during the decades he has been working on 78rpm discography. I feel blessed to have worked with him in recent years on various projects.

Record companies have created various types of sources. Some items are still preserved in organized bodies and have been indexed, while many remain undiscovered, hard to find or even lost. The various types of sources, according to Risto Pekka Pennanen<sup>3</sup>, include, among others, newspapers, catalogues, the accounting books which contain details of the recordings that were made, as reported by the recording engineers. Second, the sources include the index cards for each side that can indicate the title and the composer. Some companies also used each artist's recording sheets that contained only the matrix numbers and registration dates.

An important source is the correspondence between the sound engineers, the sales representatives, and the heads of the companies.

**Smyrna in history and culture  
(late 19<sup>th</sup> - early 20<sup>th</sup> century).  
Brief Historical Review.**

At the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Smyrna became one of the most important centers of development and progress of the time. Both its geopolitical position and the historical-social conditions in the Ottoman Empire helped it to develop as a strong attraction pole with cultural interests.

Smyrna had a developed trade and was one of the first cities in the region to maintain trade and credit relations with Western Europe during the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. Among the nationalities with intense economic activity were the Greeks, the Armenians and the Jews and to a lesser extent the Turks. According to the 1891 census by the British consulate, the greater area of Smyrna numbered 207,000 inhabitants. Of these, 107,000 were Greeks, 52,000 Turks, 23,000 Jews, 12,000 Armenians, 6,500 Italians, 2,500 French, 2,200 Austrians and 1,500 English. Gradually, the population of Smyrna increased and shortly before the catastrophe of Asia Minor in 1922, 370,000 lived exclusively in the city of Smyrna. Most were Greeks, followed by the Ottoman Turks, Jews, Armenians, Levantines and others.

During the last two decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Smyrna was a cosmopolitan assembly of cultures and different imperialist interests, and Athens was just a small rural town. The musical life of Smyrna consisted of songs in Greek, Turkish, Italian and French. This was the case until 1922 when the Asia Minor Catastrophe brought the cosmopolitan character of the city to an abrupt end.

A series of events culminating in the Russian-Turkish War of 1877-1878 resulted in the mass movement of Muslims from the Balkan Peninsula and the Caucasus to the west coast of Asia Minor. The Muslim community around Mount Pagos (Kadifekale) bordering the Jewish, the Armenians in the Basmâne area, the Greek community mainly around the port (Kordon) as well as the Frankish quarter (where the Genoese, Venetians, English, French and Dutch lived) composed the ethnic profile of Smyrna and the Franco-Levantine environment of the city. The Italian community of Smyrna was integrated into the wider Levantine community, that is, the Western Europeans who had settled there and constituted the local cultural elite. There was even an Italian girls' school. Many of the music teachers in Smyrna were of Italian origin, and many sources report Italian piano teachers, whose presence was "imperative in every rich house in Smyrna"<sup>4</sup>.

Products arrived from all over Europe and Smyrnaeans of all ethnicities had the opportunity to buy the best and newest on the market. The Franks or Levantines were the European merchants (English, French, Italians, Dutch, Swedish) who benefited from the bilateral agreements of the Ottoman Empire that provided vast privileges to the Westerners in exchange for paying taxes to the Turks. Their settlement was within the Old Walls of Smyrna. Another reason, especially for the Greeks, was the fact that the Ottoman authorities found it difficult to distinguish Greek citizens, i.e. the Greek citizens of the Ottoman State, from the Roman (Rum) Ot-

tomans<sup>5</sup>. This is how Frangomahalas<sup>6</sup> was formed, where Paul Blumberg also maintained his famous shop. The Frangomahalas of Smyrna was the most famous, most important and largest of the Frankish districts of the East<sup>7</sup>. With the arrival of the merchants, the city welcomed all the economic, social and technological developments, which would be lost with the Destruction of Smyrna in 1922.

The city was being Europeanized. Smyrna was an international port, as were Alexandria and Marseilles. Most of this commercial activity was in the hands of Greek and European merchants. A smaller portion was conducted by Armenians, Jews, and Muslims. The successful conduct of trade led to the creation of more organized trade delegations and professional associations within a predominantly Greek population. At the same time, Greeks constituted the largest percentage of professionals (doctors, lawyers). On the contrary, the Muslim population prevailed in the agricultural sector as landowners and cultivators, distributing their agricultural products on the internal market.

1908 was an important year for the Ottoman Empire. The Young Turk revolution began in 1908. The Ottoman Constitution was restored on July 23, 1908, 30 years after 1878 Sultan Abdul Hamit II abolished it in 1878. In 1908, Smyrna was a multinational city that Europeans called "the Paris of Levant" and the Turks "Gâvur Izmir" (Infidel = non-Muslim Smyrna). The Greeks were first in population, trade and letters. The predominant language was Greek. The commercial street of Smyrna was full of Greek, Turkish and Italian flags. The photograph by the Frenchman Victor Forbin captures multinationalism a few years before the catastrophe. Each store had a different flag that indicated the nationality of the owner<sup>8</sup>.

**Musical life in Smyrna (late 19<sup>th</sup> - early 20<sup>th</sup> century)**

One of the characteristic fields of the multicultural composition of Smyrna was art and creation. The musical activity that was enriched with the influx of exogenous European characteristics contributed to the special local musical idiom. Music programs in the nightclubs of the city were usually performed by kanun, oud and violin, often enriched by other folk instruments such as the clarinet, mandolin, harmonica etc<sup>9</sup>. Vertical harmony was adopted, performed by the guitar or the santour<sup>10</sup> with harps.

Greek music education in organized bodies in the city appeared much earlier than the first Turkish music school, which was founded only in 1914. The role of Greeks in musical life is highlighted by the fact that they were chosen by Sultan Abdul Hamid II both for teaching the piano to his daughters inside the Palace, as well as for conducting the Imperial Orchestra<sup>11</sup>.

In the last decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> and the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, music was fermented under new conditions by Greek folk or secular art and the European musical tradition. It flirted fearlessly with the songs of Armenians, Jews and Arabs. The wind band was in constant competition with various other musical instruments (cello, double bass, winds) as well as with Balkan instruments (tambourines, oud, ka-

nuns), often in improbable musical combinations. Until the catastrophe, small orchestras, the famous *estudiantines*, were very popular in the Greek community in Asia Minor. Initially they consisted mainly of Italian-style mandolins that were enriched with other instruments, 3 to 8 instrumentalists, 2-3 singers and often a small choir.

In the folk music of multicultural Smyrna, the coexistence of musicians took place in a non-conflicting context, characterized by exchange. It is not uncommon for recordings to capture the collaboration of representatives of very different aesthetics<sup>12</sup>. Companies with mainly Greek musicians and singers, but also Armenians, Jews and Turks, played for the public in various entertainment centers, frequented by residents, depending on their social class. They were often accompanied by Rums, Turks, Levantines, Italians and French, Gypsies and Hungarians who danced and sang in front of an audience from all the tribes of the East and the West. All kinds of songs could be heard in pubs, hotels and taverns, in *café aman* and *café santan* (chantant), in theaters and clubs. Violins, santurs, oud and kanuns, saz, clarinets, tambourines and other instruments such as mandolins, cornets, karamouzes<sup>13</sup>, laternas<sup>14</sup>, and guitars, wine glasses or wooden spoons and a musical feast was a reality.

#### The role of the local agents

In the early 1900s, major record companies were feverishly recording separate repertoires for major nationalities and ethnic groups around the world in order to conquer new markets. They made audio carriers (cylinders or discs) as well as disc players (phonographs or gramophones). They had realized that without an impressive recorded repertoire of local music it was impossible to sell equipment in any area<sup>15</sup>. Various recording systems were used, which meant that one company's cylinders or records could not necessarily be played on machines of other companies<sup>16</sup>.

The Gramophone Company, founded in 1898 in London by British and American businessmen, soon became the market leader. The company's records were originally pressed in Hanover. Within a few years it managed to take over an early competing company, the International Zonophone Company, thus strengthening its position in the market. Gramophone records were originally produced (pressed) in Hanover, where Emile Berliner's brother Joseph had founded Deutsche Grammophon-Aktiengesellschaft (DGAG), the German subsidiary of the company. From 1907 onwards, a new factory was established in Hayes, Middlesex and within a few years expanded to other European cities. So, the recording business started in 1898 and thanks to the work of Alan Kelly (along with John Perkins and John Ward), we have an extensive survey of the company's recording activities until the 1930s<sup>17</sup>. The records were released on the Gramophone and Zonophone labels.

In the early years, record companies invested in establishing agents, who acted as representatives in their country. At the same time, during the first years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, advertisements of the stores were published in various magazines/periodicals/newspapers and reflected the emergence of a market for phonographs, gramophones and recordings. Lo-

cal record agents and affiliates of the record companies were also advertised in newspapers for the newly introduced and locally recorded songs. Some also published albums with lyrics and scores of local folk music. These printed sources reveal two things. First, that record companies perceived different markets in terms of musical taste and audience, and secondly, a stylistically hybrid folk music that transcended borders was in the process of being created<sup>18</sup>.

Depending on their marketing strategies, the establishment and development of the record market followed two distinct patterns. One concerned the creation of commercial facilities exclusively dedicated to the sale of their own brand. Another market penetration strategy was the use of already established stores in urban centers as points of sale for equipment and recordings and their owners as local agents. These dealers often participated in the trade of various products, such as bicycles, sewing machines, cameras and optical equipment, placing the commercialization of new recording technology on the same footing as other technological innovations<sup>19</sup>. This second pattern includes local dealers in Smyrna (Paul Blumberg) and Constantinople (Sigmund Weinberg) who did not exclusively sell gramophones and records. Before they became involved with the record industry, their stores already existed in the last decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

During this period, local agents and merchants played a key role in connecting local artists and musicians with record companies, as they were able to convey market demand and their impressions of the recordings. Local branches were also established in other large market areas, while small markets were served by local dealers. By 1910, record factories had been built in Britain, Austria-Hungary, Russia, India and elsewhere<sup>20</sup>. The regular studios were only available in a few large locations, and most recordings were made by a group of touring "experts" whose work was overseen by their companies in Britain and Germany<sup>21</sup>. In this context, the Gramophone Company's activities are well documented in the company's surviving records.

Within a few years the major record companies were recording everywhere in the world, including the East, and had set up local agents in the most important countries. Recordings covered a wide range of musical styles and styles, and record companies made numerous recordings of the major musical traditions of the East. However, they also recorded military bands, comedians, songs composed with European instruments; virtually any music that might be of particular interest to the bourgeois public.

The local agents of the record companies had their own influence on the process of recording music in non-Western cultures. They had the role of looking for suitable musicians and bringing them into contact with interested record companies. As a result, they played a key role in the companies' activities and in their success in recording music and creating an attractive catalogue suitable for local markets and their clients. One such case was Paul Blumberg. Almost every kind of music of that time, but also a repertoire of all ethnic groups that was extensively analyzed in the previous sections is to be found in the orders of Paul Blumberg.

### The recording engineers who made the records ordered by Paul Blumberg

Frederick William Gaisberg (Fred Gaisberg, 1873-1951)<sup>22</sup> was a representative of the Gramophone Company. He had a remarkable career in the industry since his school years. In 1902 he recorded in London, in 1905 in Milan and in 1906 in London, Milan and Cairo.

William Conrad Gaisberg (Will Gaisberg, 1877/78-1918), who recorded in Vienna in early 1904, went to Constantinople in late April to record for the Gramophone Company<sup>23</sup>. According to Ludwig Wild<sup>24</sup>, the recordings in Constantinople were extremely important in order to build a good repertoire. The Greek records he recorded were not many. The singers who took part in these recordings included Ovrík Efendi, Karakaş Efendi, Civan Efendi, Hafız Efendi, Hanende Ali Bey and Ioannis P. Agiasmatzis.

William Sinkler Darby (1878-1950)<sup>25</sup> started working with Emile Berliner in the late 1890's. In 1899, he and Fred Gaisberg traveled around Europe and Asia to make recordings. Subsequent expeditions took him to St. Petersburg in 1901, Berlin and Constantinople in 1904, Cairo and Alexandria in 1905.

Georg Franz Hampe (Franz Hampe, 1879-1947)<sup>26</sup> and his brother Theodor Heinrich Max Hampe (Max Hampe, 1877-1957)<sup>27</sup> were recording engineers from Berlin, Germany. Franz started his career in 1901 or 1902, Max followed in April 1904. They worked in Central, Southeastern and Eastern Europe, Cairo, Constantinople, Tbilisi and Tehran. They were highly respected professionals and recorded some of the most famous artists of the time. Max Hampe accompanied the American Sinkler Darby to India in December 1904. and in 1906 he recorded in Constantinople. Franz Hampe recorded in Constantinople in 1903 and in Berlin in 1904. In 1907, he was sent to Sarajevo to make the first gramophone recordings there.<sup>28</sup>

Charles / Carl Anton Scheuplein (Charlie Scheuplein, 1876-1921)<sup>29</sup> was another recording engineer of the Gramophone Company, associated with the French branch. In 1907, he recorded in Constantinople and in 1908 in Berlin.

Finally, Cleveland Walcutt (1862-1949)<sup>30</sup> was a manufacturer and dealer of cylinder records and supplies in New York in the late 1890's, along with Edward F. Leeds<sup>31</sup>. After Walcutt and Leeds dissolved, Walcutt moved to France to help Emile Berliner organize a branch of the Gramophone company there, while Leeds would join with L. Reade Catlin to form the Leeds and Catlin Company<sup>32</sup>. Walcutt was a recording engineer for the Gramophone Company from 1901 till the end of 1907. In 1905 he recorded in Paris.

### The Life Story of Paul Blumberg

Paul Blumberg was a Franco-Levantine of German descent<sup>33</sup>. He was born around 1860 in Braila, Romania and died on June 4, 1912 in Austria<sup>34</sup>. He was married to Dina Blumberg (maiden name unknown), and together they had four children. His shop, which originally sold optics and

watches, was founded in 1886. There are references both in the bibliography and in advertisements in Smyrnaean newspapers of the time<sup>35</sup>. In 1888 it is registered in the annual trade catalog of Smyrna in the category "Watchmakers and Sellers" under the name Blumberg Bros in the location Passage Psarochano<sup>36</sup>.

In 1891 the Blumberg brothers reappear in the *Horlogers* (Watchmakers) category in the Oriental Guide of Istanbul in the Zaro Han location in Smyrna<sup>37</sup>. In 1893 he is referred to as Blumberg P. M., Watchmaker and optician on the Rue Franque in Smyrna<sup>38</sup>, as well as in 1896<sup>39</sup>. There is even a couplet with a rhyme: "In Blumberg's, many people cut the time in the store, to put their watches at the exact time...". It is similarly described in the book of Philip K. Falbou<sup>40</sup>: "Blumberg, near the entrance of the church of the Lazarists (Sacré Coeur), a shop of optical items and watches. From the precision clock outside his shop, the passers-by from Smyrna regulated the correct time of their watches"<sup>41</sup>.

In 1901 in the commercial guide of Smyrna and its surroundings, Paul Blumberg on the European street is listed in the category of sellers and watchmakers<sup>42</sup>. It should be noted here that the European street or Rue Franque, i.e. the street of the Franks or Frangomahalas was the most well-kept street in Smyrna and at that time gathered the best shops of the city. The Turkish name of the European road was "Sultania sokak" or "Metzidie".

In the spring of 1904, the French newspaper published in Thessaloniki contained the following two "Important Notes": 1) "*We draw our readers' attention to the important note of Paul Blumberg's house in Smyrna that we publish on page 4. The envoy of this great representative stayed at the Grand Hotel. He stayed in Thessaloniki for a few days. Anyone who wants to see him, will do well to hurry.*"<sup>43</sup> "IMPORTANT NOTE": *From January 1, 1904, the Gramophone Company, having undertaken the construction and all the activities of ZONOPHONES whose exclusive sale I have for Turkey and the islands of the Archipelago, I have the advantage to inform you about my representative in Thessaloniki who came with large stock in: Gramophones and Zonophones at extremely reduced factory prices... The great reduction in prices on gramophones and zonophones, these devices that were once expensive and luxury items now make it possible in all budgets so that the family can get some for fun and replace all other musical instruments.*

*With the "Gramophone" or the "Zonophone" we have at home a good European Orchestra, all the Operas by the best Artists in the world, such as: Enrico Caruso, Tamagno, Mme Calvé, Mme Bruno and comic songs. Dances and native TURKISH and GREEK songs.*

*The house traveler stays at the Grand Hotel.  
Large selection of these discs.  
Paul Blumberg Smyrna.*

*Unique Representative and Custodian of the Gramophone and Zonophone Companies.*<sup>44</sup>

And 2): *The traveler from the house of Paul Blumberg of Smyrna, unique representative and custodian of the companies Gram-*



ophone and Zonophone of London, Vienna, Berlin and Paris, received a new variety of improved gramophones and belts for sale very reduced. With the huge reduction in the prices of Gramophones and Zonophones, these devices, which were once very expensive, are now so cheap that any child can buy them for fun as a replacement for any other musical instrument. With the gramophone we have at home a good European orchestra and all the passages sung by the best artists in the world.

Comic songs, indigenous dances and songs, Turks, Arabs, Greeks, Bulgarians, Serbs, etc. Large variety of these records. List price and list of discs on request, free of charge. The traveler intends to stay here only for a short time, so it is in the interest of those wishing to purchase them to contact without delay the sales facility located on Rue Sabri Pacha at Tiano frères's Simba building. Important note.

Worn discs are bought again at a good price. Particularly favorable terms are provided to those who wish to arrange for their resale.

Gramophones and Zonophones. Wholesale and retail. Paul Blumberg Smyrna.

Unique Representative and Custodian of the Gramophone and Zonophone Companies.<sup>45</sup>

According to the above publications, Paul Blumberg, as he himself mentions, claimed to be the only and exclusive representative of the companies Gramophone and Zonophone in Smyrna from January 1, 1904. However, it is strange that his name is not mentioned in correspondence found in the EMI archive before 1907. There is no doubt that he sold records earlier than 1907, as he also had a personal relationship with Sigmund Weinberg<sup>46</sup> (married to Paul's sister, Caroline Blumberg), but his boast that he was the only official Gramophone agent could not be true, according to Hugo Strötbaum. Weinberg had been Gramophone's official sole representative in Constantinople since 1903 and appears in the contemporary correspondence regularly from very early on. Blumberg undoubtedly sold gramophone products (gramophones & records), but his claim is hard to believe.

In 1906, a German publication states that Paul Blumberg, after his wife Dona (sic.) and their son Emil, had Smyrna as their usual place of residence. Their short stay in Germany was at Untere Kaiserstrasse 3, Borussia<sup>47</sup>.

Finally, in 1909-1910, in the Greek commercial guide of Turkey, in the category Phonographs, Blumberg P. is also listed on "European Street"<sup>48</sup>.

#### The Paul Blumberg files: a veritable time-capsule of musical tastes in 1908 Smyrna.

The following is a description and analysis of Paul Blumberg's correspondence with the Gramophone Company in 1908, as it survives, and a detailed table of his orders. On Blumberg's official letterhead, on the left side of the page, are printed all the products provided by his store, with his exclusive representation on Gramophone and Zonophone

gramophone records dominating: *Seul Agent-Depositaire des Grammophon & Zonophon Cies Ltd. Londres, Berlin, Paris, Vienne. Riche Assortiment de Montres, Chaines, et Bijouterie en or et en argent. Spécialité d'Optique soignée-Seul Agent-Depositaire pour la Turquie des Verres Isométriques. Lunettes, pince-nez en or, argent, écaille, nichel etc. etc. Verres Cristal de Roche Jumelles Gærz, Baromètres, etc. Grand Depot d'Appareils de Photographie Cartons et Acceddoires Pour Photographes & Amateurs. Appareils & Pellicules "Kodak". Seul Agent-Depositaire des Plaques et Papiers "Impérial", Plaques et Papiers "Lumière" Produits Chimiques pour la Photographie. Articles pour la Peinture a l' Huile et pour Aquarelle de Liefrane & Co. et Dr. E. Schoenfeld & Co. Lampes Electriques de Poche. Vente en Gros et en Détail. Adresse Télégraphique: Blumberg – Smyrne.*

The language used by Blumberg is the German/German-Yiddish dialect. That means that an English translation of his letters had to follow because Blumberg obviously did not know English. The translator's message in one of Blumberg's translated letters is characteristic: *Note: The author's knowledge of German is so limited that what he says is frequently almost unintelligible. Translator.*

Of course, Blumberg used Gramco's record catalogues for ordering Greek and Turkish repertoire from London, as is evidenced by the catalogues that have been preserved<sup>49</sup> with the beautiful image that adorns their cover and depicts the flags of five different countries: Italy, England, Turkey, Egypt, France, Greece<sup>50</sup>. He often used the printed catalogue numbers before the side numbers in his wish lists.

It is noteworthy that Blumberg often noted the number of copies of each record he wished to be sent to him, and many of them were included in more than one order. Finally, at the end of his correspondence he noted the type of the postal package and the route of the shipment from Hanover to Smyrna.

The tables at the end of the article summarize all the information presented and analyzed here and provide detailed information on each record that Blumberg traded.

#### Paul Blumberg's correspondence in 1908:

##### 1.) Smyrna, 12 January 1908

to The Gramophone Company Ltd, London. The postcard to the Gramophone Company Limited in London bears the stamp of Paul Blumberg. On the back is his order are included five double-faced records with western (European) music recorded in 1904 in Berlin, Vienna and Bayreuth (Table 1). These records were ordered only once, in January 1908 (Table 2).

##### 2.) Smyrna, 3<sup>rd</sup> February 1908.

The Gramophone Co. Ltd., London

Dear Sirs,

I wrote you on the 28<sup>th</sup> ulto. and am in receipt of your favour of the 22<sup>nd</sup> January.

As regards the Victor apparatus, this refers to the American Victor apparatus of the Victor Talking Machine Co. regarding which you

*yourself have already sent me two enquires received from Smyrna, asking me to attend to the matter, the enquiries in question being enclosed, the first in your favour of the 31<sup>st</sup> December 1907 and the other in your favour of the 15<sup>th</sup> January 1908.*

*As your company is an amalgamated company surely you ought to be able to supply such apparatus, for which there is considerable demand here. I should be glad indeed if you would confirm to me your willingness to supply such apparatus and at the same time send me the catalogue in question, stating what prices you would charge me as I can then at once send you a fine order.*

*As regards the exchange of the used records, I am still without...*

### 3.) Smyrna, 26 April 1908

*The Gramophone Co. Ltd., London.*

*Copy of order to Cairo/ or records.*

*Please send from London or Hanover 200 envelopes for Concert Records by bookpost.*

In 1907, Gramophone Company opened regional offices in Alexandria. Earlier, Egypt was a sub-branch of the Italian branch. Soon, an extensive Arabic repertoire was recorded and released on the Egyptian market. At the same time, Greek and Turkish catalogs were circulating. Blumberg's order includes 17 double-faced records of Arabic music recorded in Alexandria in 1905 and Cairo in 1906 (Table 1). Most were ordered again in June (Table 2).

### 4.) Smyrna, 10 Mai 1908

*The Gramophone Co. Ltd., London*

Blumberg orders from Hannover 106 Turkish and Greek double face records recorded in 1905-1907 in Constantinople and issued on the Zonophone sub-label. At the same time, he notes how many copies of each record he wants. Usually, the number of copies was from one to three. (Tables 1, 2)

### 5.) Smyrna, 7 June 1908

*The Gramophone Co. Ltd., London*

*Dear Sirs,*

*I wrote you on the 25<sup>th</sup> May and have received your favours dated 20<sup>th</sup>, 21<sup>st</sup>, 22<sup>nd</sup>, 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> ulto.*

*As regards Greek records taken in London, I hope that I may soon receive them or a specimen of each record.*

*I received enclosed in your favour of the 25<sup>th</sup> ulto. 2 credit notes for £5.14.5 and £3.3.10 respectively for used records.*

*Enclosed in your favour of the 26<sup>th</sup> May you sent me a returned receipt for £5.3.0 relative to case P.B.I. forwarded by s.s. "OR-CHIS". In order to enable me to collect the amount I request you to send me the insurance pollicy for this shipment, because I do not even know the name of the company with whom the goods were insured. I have not received the insurance policy which, according to your favour of the 26<sup>th</sup> May, was forwarded, together with the goods.*

*I enclose copy of an order for records I am sending to Hanover.*

*Yours truly,  
(sgd.) PAUL BLUMBERG*

The order that accompanied this letter was very large: 270 double-sided records of mainly Turkish and Greek music recorded from 1903 to 1907 in Constantinople. This order was followed by 13 double-sided Arabic records recorded in Alexandria in 1905 and in Cairo in 1906 and 10 double Turkish 17.5 cm records recorded in Constantinople in 1905. (Tables 1, 2). This was the second and final order of 1908 with Arabic repertoire.

### 6.) Smyrna, 31<sup>st</sup> July 1908

*Gramophone Co. Ltd., London.*

*Dear Sirs,*

*I have received your favours of the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> inst. From your favour of the 2<sup>nd</sup> inst. I note that you will place to my credit the amount of Messrs Benson & Co's receipt for £5.3.0, which I have sent you.*

*Although in your letter of the 2<sup>nd</sup> inst, you said that, within the next few days, you would send me the new Greek records I am surprised at not having received them yet, but I do hope that their arrival will not be delayed much longer.*

*As regards the Turkish records which are in stock at Cairo, I dare not order any of them, because many of them are used (worn out, decrepit) records, which might cause me unplesantness.*

*Your last shipment of records, as per invoice of the 25<sup>th</sup> June 1908, has arrived here. On checking the records the following facts have been ascertained by me: instead of sending as ordered, according to Turkish catalogue, series 436-X103140 (x) 2 Bon Akcham gun hataskan X 102226 Firkatin Atchdi, the records received belong to series 125 - X 103140 Guenul serdi bir doubteri X 102226 Firkatin Atchdi, and consequently No. 103140 appears for two different songs. Seeing that you state the series on the records according to the Turkish catalogue, it follows that one must be guided by the catalogue. Series 125 is in the Turkish catalogue on one side marked X 103140 and on the other side marked X 103211. Series 125 has not been ordered by me at all. Besides the following was ordered: Series 487-2-102239/104586 (both sides Greek) and I have received records marked with the same correct numbers on both sides, but No. 2-102239 represents a Turkish and not a Greek piece, so that the record on one side is Turkish and Greek on the other. If the records had been checked with the assistance of the series of the Turkish catalogue of which I have forwarded two to Hanover, one old and one new, then this mistake could not have been made.*

*As you will be able to see, a mistake has been made in the Nos at the factory, i.e., in series No. 398 (page 11 of the catalogue) No. 2-102239 represents the Turkish piece Ibtiarlik bahiti ackdir, whilst in series No. 487 (page 26 of the catalogue) the same No. 2-102239 represents the Greek piece Toska Yeloussan t' asteria and it is therefore necessary that one of these records should be given a different number. These wrong records, which are unsealable, have to-day been returned by me to Hanover, as per list on the next page. On this occasion I have also returned to you 2 records belonging to recent shipments, because these records were defective when leaving the matrices and I should like to know whether these Nos, can still be ordered and whether perhaps you possess good spare matrices. I have also to report that the following re-*

cords: series 232-X 109255/X 102757 and 403-X 2-102312/X 2-102280, also 277-X 2-102315/X 2-102269 are defective and the defect on the records is straight on the same spot. I have returned them now, because they are records much in demand, perhaps it may be possible to get rid of these records which belong to recent shipments, otherwise I will on the first opportunity return them to Hanover. Unfortunately these two kinds of records, and in particular series Nos. 403 and 377 were one of the best records and it seems to me that the matrices were spoiled.

With reference to the large order for records recently given you, I have to-day forwarded to Hanover 47 used concert records, 45 small records and request you to place the respective amount to my credit.

Your truly,  
PAUL BLUMBERG.

List of records returned to Hanover:

Series 125 -  $\frac{X 103140}{X 102226} (x2)$ , 487 -  $\frac{2-102239}{104586} (x7)$

Series 386 -  $\frac{X2-102310}{X2-102309} (x2)$

Making a total of 11 double records, concert, which please place to my credit.

When the last shipment of records was made, of many Nos. 1 to 3 records more than ordered were sent, making a total of 12, which I have, however, kept.

From Blumberg's letter above, it seems that he did not want to upset his prospective buying public by ordering used Turkish records that were in stock at the branch office in Cairo. He also expresses his dissatisfaction with the fact that one Turkish record did not correspond with the record catalogue and that another record contains one Turkish and one Greek track on each side. He recommends that if they were more careful in consulting the lists, these mistakes could be avoided.

#### 7.) Smyrna, 3<sup>rd</sup> August 1908

Messrs. The German Gramophone Co. Hanover.

On the next sheet I am giving you a trial order for new Greek records, which you are requested to forward as soon as you can. I have been informed from London that the following numbers can now be ordered.

5-12572, 5-12573, 5-12574 without indication whether these records are double and if so how each record is made double. Should they not be double, I request you to join No. 5-12573 of my present order to No. 5-12572 on six records, and to join the same No. 5-12573 to No. 5-12574 on the other sex records. Should this not be possible, please forward single records as follows. 8 of No. 5-12573, 2 of No. 5-12572, 2 of No. 5-12574. In all 12 records, packed in a 5 kilo postal parcel. But I should prefer double records joined as stated above.

Yours truly

#### ORDER

15 kilo postal parcel containing up to 12 records No. 5-12573, six of them being joined to No. 5-12572 and the remaining six being joined to 5-12574. Should it, however, be absolutely impossible to join them i.e. to make them into double records, then please forward 12 single records as stated above. The postal parcel to be forwarded as always via Belgrads.

#### 8.) Smyrna, 20 August 1908

to The Gramophone Co. Ltd., London.

Until 1915, the Gramophone Company used *Gramophone Record*, *Gramophone Concert Record* and *Gramophone Monarch Record* as names on its labels. These different labels indicated the size of the discs: 17.5cm, 25cm, 30cm respectively. The order accompanying the letter of August 20 consists of 14 French double-sided records recorded in Paris in 1905-1906, 13 Turkish and Greek records, 12 Italian titles on the Gramophone label recorded in Milan and a few records on the Gramophone Monarch Record label. (Tables 1, 2)

#### 9.) Smyrna, 01 September 1908

to The Gramophone Co. Ltd., London.

The order includes a small number of Italian records from Gramophone at 25cm and 30cm and three Greek records with the Zonophone label. (Tables 1, 2)

#### 10.) Smyrna, 8<sup>th</sup> September 1908

The Gramophone Co. Ltd., London

Dear Sirs,

I wrote you on the 2<sup>nd</sup> inst. and received your favours of the 1<sup>st</sup> and 1<sup>st</sup> September. Enclosed is a copy of a small record order for Hanna. I have at last received the sample consignment of 12 one side records, Greek. Unfortunately No. 5-12573 Smyrniopoulo from which I anticipated a great deal is not a success; the singer did not sing correctly according to the music and in addition he went much too slow. The customers who have waited for it with such anxiety are now laughing at it. If you had at the time accepted the singer whom we wished to send from here to London and whose requirements were modest he would have given you good records not only from the Smyrniopoulo but also the other music sent you. As to the two other Greek records No. 5-12572 and No. 5-12574 which were not ordered by me I do not care that they are likewise not successful.

Auxetophone<sup>51</sup>. My letter referring to this of the 27<sup>th</sup> August crossed your favour of the 1<sup>st</sup> inst. As you will see from my letter you can despatch the Auxetophone.

Please take this opportunity of packing in the same box for my account:

2 Monarch Junior (Oak) Single Spring at £5.10.0 gross

2 Monarch (Oak) Double Spring at £7.10.0 gross.

10,000 Melba Needles.

To be forwarded as freight goods, on which you will pay the freight from London to here for my account. The Auxetophone and the 4 appliances and needles to be packed in a single box.

Yours faithfully,  
(Sd.) PAUL BLUMBERG.

*P.S. As I already wrote you accumulators are for sale here only their price is high. If it offers no difficulty, I would ask you to purchase the necessary accumulators for my account and pack them in the same box. If absolutely unavoidable you can pack everything in two boxes.*

## ORDER.

*Gramophone Double Records.*  
 Concert C  $\frac{39182}{39183}$  C  $\frac{37350}{39183}$  C  $\frac{49001}{49002}$  C  $\frac{54279}{53422}$

Monarch M  $\frac{037902}{037903}$  M  $\frac{037900}{037901}$  M 022025

*If the two records M  $\frac{054096}{054095}$  ordered in addition*

*on 2<sup>na</sup> inst. have not been packed with the order of the 1<sup>st</sup> inst. please add them to to-day's order.*

*Forwarding by postal package of 5 kgs. via Belgrade, as hitherto sent.*

The order of the September 8<sup>th</sup> included 25cm Gramophone records recorded in Russia in 1901-1902, Berlin in 1904, Milan in 1905 and 30cm records recorded in London in 1906, Russia in 1903 and Milan in 1906.

1908 was an important year in Smyrna and all Turkey. Like many other record dealers, Blumberg was eager to stock the latest fashionable songs. The Young Turk revolution of that year also resulted in a constitutional reform which was reflected in music. However, in 1908 no recording experts were available in Smyrna or Milan, as mentioned in the letter of October 6 (below). The only solution would be to have a number of new songs and marches recorded in London by artists already present there, performed from musical scores. The company not only had to find a good singer, but someone familiar with the Greek language. Earlier in April 1908, Blumberg had recommended to the headquarters to record "Smyrniopoula", a currently popular song. The people from London asked him to send the score, and they would try to make a record immediately if they could find a suitable singer.

Blumberg finally sent two scores some days later. In May 1908, he first suggested a Greek singer, Antonis Melitzianos, who was liked by the Greek people in Smyrna. However, the company decided to approach Alexandros Sterio (aka Sergiades) who lived in London; for the marches, the Black Diamonds Band. As a result of this rather round-about way, Alexander Sterio did not capture the right musical atmosphere in "Smyrniopoula", the musical style of Smyrna. His idea of how the song was to be performed was completely different. This incident provoked complaints from Blumberg, who expressed his dissatisfaction with the end-result to the London Head Office and reported that his clients in Smyrna laughed at this version of the song.

Here is the correspondence:

**London, 14 April 1908**

The Gramophone Company (London) to Paul Blumberg (Smyrna):

*With reference to your special request for a record to be made of a Greek song, we would say that if you will send the music and the words to us here [= in London] we will endeavour to get a record made immediately if we can find a suitable singer. It will be of no avail to send the music to Milan as there is not a permanent recording laboratory there, nor are any of our Recording Experts in Milan at the present time.*

**Smyrna, 22 April 1908**

to The Gramophone Company Ltd., London:

*... in regard to taking records in London of Greek songs, I am sending two pieces of music, one for one side of the record, "Smyrniopoulo", and for the other side "Paramana".*

**Smyrna, 12 May 1908**

to The Gramophone Company Ltd., London:

*The object of the present letter is to inform you that there is now in Smyrna the Greek singer [= Antonis Melitzianos], who, at the time [Spring of 1907] sang as solo tenor in Greek the record No. X-2-102339 "Tosca"<sup>52</sup> at Constantinople, which is liked by the Greeks.*

The sound engineers as well as the local agents were able to recognize voices that were the most suitable for recording purposes, making them the most important persons in the process of selecting the artists. At the same time there was already competition from other record companies like Odeon. The song "Smyrniopoula" is characteristic of the presence of Neapolitan song in the Greek-speaking world. This song was recorded in Constantinople for Odeon (side number: 58579) by the Smyrna Estudiantina of Constantinople (1908-1909), and again in Smyrna for Gramophone Concert Record (side numbers: 6-12688 & 6-12688X) by the Greek Estudiantina in 1909, and several times in the United States of America. The first recording is for violin and piano (or santouri or harpsichord), the second for a small ensemble of wind instruments. "Smyrniopoula" is the Greek version of the song "Nanninella" composed by Antonio Barbieri and Vincenzo Di Chiara. According to Aristomenis Kalyviotis, this song was an "Italian success from 1905 to 1906", and it was performed by performances of Elvira Donnarumma at the Eldorado Theater in Naples in 1906<sup>53</sup>.

**11.) Smyrna, 16 September 1908**

to The Gramophone Co. Ltd., London.

Eight French records recorded in Paris in 1906-1907 on the Zonophone label are included in this order, six Italian recorded in Milan in 1904-1906 and one record from New York on the Gramophone Monarch Record label. (Tables 1, 2)

**12.) Sept 17-1908**

Mr. Paul Blumberg

Smyrna.

Dear Sir,

*Replying to your letter of September 2<sup>nd</sup> we would say that we have this week made records of the musical pieces "Marche de la Liberté" and "Constitution Hymn of the year 1876" of which you sent us the scores. We do not yet know how these have resulted,*



but hope to be able to send you the catalogue Nos. in a few days to enable you to order supplies from Hanover.

Yours truly,

THE GRAMOPHONE COMPANY LIMITED.

**13.) Sept 25-1908**

Mr. Paul Blumberg  
Smyrna.

Dear Sir,

We beg to refer to your letter of September 8<sup>th</sup> and regret to learn that you are disappointed in the Greek Records which were made specially for you. There were certain reasons which prevented us from employing the singer whom you recommended in this case and we did the best we could with the material at our command.

Auxetophone. We do not feel sure that you yet fully understand this matter. If you will send us a firm order for a set of Electric Accumulators for driving the Auxetophone we are willing to forward you an Auxetophone on consignment, but it must be clearly understood that the accumulators are not on consignment, that is, that you buy them absolutely; the cost price for a set of accumulators is £20.0.0.

There accumulators will require charging on arrival, and re-charging at intervals thereafter, and the charging can only be done at some place where electric current available. Your previous letters have left us in some doubt as to whether it is possible to get accumulators charged in Smyrna.

As it will be impracticable to pack the Auxetophone and the accumulators in one box, or to pack the four ordinary machines which you order in your present letter with them, we are taking the liberty of sending these four machines and the thousand Melba Needles forward separately. We note the Order for records enclosed in your letter and have duly confirmed these to Hanover.

We have now made records of the two special Band pieces for which you asked us, and the Catalogue Nos. are as follows: -  
"Constitution Hymn of the year 1876" Catalogue No. 2-432  
"Marche de la Liberté" Catalogue No. 2-433

In accordance with your letter of the 2<sup>nd</sup> inst., we have entered your order to Hanover to forward you immediately twelve of the records.

Yours truly,

THE GRAMOPHONE COMPANY LIMITED.

**14.) Oct 6<sup>th</sup> 1908**

Mr. Paul Blumberg  
Smyrna.

Dear Sir,

We have your letter of Sept 30<sup>th</sup> and in reply would say that we did not reply to your remarks about recording in Turkey as we had already informed you in reply to more than one previous enquiry we think, that we could not make arrangements for Turkish Recording at the time, but that the matter would have our attention as soon as it was possible for us to take any steps. All our recording experts have been, and are still, very fully engaged on urgent work elsewhere, and as their movements are generally arranged some months in advance it is not possible for us at the present time to make any arrangements for Turkey.

With regard to Constitutional music, we could draw your at-

tention to the two records which we have just made here, one being "The Constitution Hymn of the year 1876" (Catalogue No. 2-432) and the other "Marche de la Liberté" (Catalogue No. 2-433.)

The records are available from Hanover in the form of a double-sided record.

Yours truly,

THE GRAMOPHONE COMPANY LIMITED.

**15.) Smyrna, 14 October 1908**

to The Gramophone Co. Ltd., London.

There was not a record order with this letter, but Blumberg commented about some of the recordings, among them the two last ones with Constitutional Music.

**16.) Smyrna, 24 October 1908.**

The Gramophone Co. Ltd., London

Dear Sirs,

I have to-day received from Hanover one postal parcel containin

12 records No.  $\frac{2-433}{2-432}$  of the new Turkish Hymn.

I hope that these records will be popular, and I hand you herewith a copy of my order to-day to Hanover for the same records. Hanover has, however, furnished these Turkish Records with "Gramophone" instead of "Zonophone" labels. All Turkish records are only to be made as Zonophone, customers paying for all Turkish records one price. Will you therefore be good enough to see that these records are made as Zonophone, and also that I am charged with the records received to-day at Zonophone prices. Otherwise, I shall have difficulty in disposing of them. If you are not willing to make these Turkish records as Zonophone, my present order is not to be executed, as I am unable to sell the records at raised prices. We have quite sufficient competition from the Odeon, and do not need any further difficulties to be put in our way.

Awaiting your reply by return, we remain,

Yours etc,

("Sd) Paul Blumberg

Enc.

Paul Blumberg's Order to Hanover: 24/10/08.

I have received your favour of the 26<sup>th</sup> August and 7/8 of this month. Herewith I enclose an order, which you will be kind enough to execute promptly.

I have written to-day to the Head Office in London that these records, as they are Turkish, are to be executed as Zonophone and not as Gramophone. The order is only to be executed after you shall have received instructions from London.

Please do not then delay dispatch, as you did last time.

Order

Record  $\frac{2-432}{2-433}$  Two post parcels of 5 ko. containing in Zonophone

Forward as usual via Belgrade.

The record of this order was an important political record that was recorded in London in September 1908, shortly

after the important events that took place in the summer of the same year. On one side was the Turkish National Anthem (Hymn) or Anthem of the Constitution of 1876 and on the other side the Freedom March (Hürriyet Marşı).

The Kânûn-ı Esâsî (“basic law”) or Constitution of 1876 was the first and last Constitution of the Ottoman Empire. It was proclaimed on December 23, 1876. It was suspended in 1878 by Abdülhamid and re-entered into force as a result of the revolution of July 24, 1908. The march refers to Ahmed Niyazi Bey and İsmail Enver or Enver Pasha, members of the Turkish Union and Progress Party (Committee of Union and Progress, later Union and Progress Party), who played a leading role in the Young-Turkish Revolution that began in 1908 in Thessaloniki under Ottoman Occupation. The lyrics were written by the expatriate lawyer Anastasios Tokatoglou and the music by Vassilios Sideris<sup>54</sup>.

In almost all of Blumberg’s correspondence, references to finances are evident. In addition to customer preferences for the repertoire to be sold in his store, Blumberg was aware of his customer’s response to record prices. The local representatives recognized the financial laws of supply and demand and pointed out to record companies relevant issues regarding the competition in the industry.

**17.) Smyrna, 5 November 1908**  
to *The Gramophone Co. Ltd., London*

This Blumberg order consists of 100 Turkish and Greek records on the Zonophone label. Also, 8 double-sided Turkish 17.5cm records on the same label.

### Conclusions

The archival material and the discographical sources, wherever they are preserved, lead to the documentation of the relevant research. The study of the recorded sound presupposes the scientific collection, archiving and study of sources for the historically oriented study of music. Summarizing what was analyzed above, we come to the following conclusions:

In the last quarter of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the first quarter of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Smyrna and Constantinople had a rich and versatile musical life. Constantinople was the center of the Ottoman Empire and was considered the most important city in the Balkans, so many recordings were made there. In 1908, the focus on Constantinople as the only recording location (Sigmund Weinberg) had finally shifted to other centers, such as Thessaloniki and Smyrna. In the early years (1900-1912) the Gramophone Company in the Ottoman Empire was run by both the Vienna branch and the Cairo/Alexandria branch, which was a sub-branch of the Milan branch. After some time (1907 or 1908) K.F. Vogel<sup>55</sup> (Egypt) was given representation in Egypt, European Turkey, Asian Turkey, Syria and parts of the Balkans (probably Albania). Later, in 1912 or 1913, EMI changed its system of local representatives and created a new Overseas Department.

The multicultural profile of Smyrna, as described in the first paragraphs of the article, is clearly reflected in the variety of Blumberg’s orders. The prospective buying public was interested in a repertoire of Turkish, Greek, French, Italian and German music, just like the nationalities that made up the population of Smyrna. The linguistic diversity and the

type of repertoire included operas, estudiantines, amanedes, zeybeks, folk songs, harmonica (i.e. button-accordion), gazel, kanto, şarkı, etc. Each class had its own music. The aristocrats enjoyed pianos, operettas, European lyric songs, arias from operas and fashionable love songs. The middle class liked foreign popular songs in urban populist style (such as Korde-liotissa or Bournovalia), in Smyrnaean songs, mainly patriotic songs, and so on. The lower class preferred genuine folk music, well-known Turkish, Jewish or Armenian folk songs, and even rebetika songs from infamous nightclubs.

These items are a random sample from the time Blumberg was a representative in Smyrna (1904 - 1912), but they give us some idea of the kind of music that people in Smyrna were interested in. We call it a random sample because the letters from 1908 are the only detailed evidence that survives from all the years of his agency in Smyrna, 1904-1912.

Between January 12 and November 5, 1908, Paul Blumberg ordered a total of 406 different records. In many cases he wanted more than one copy, while sometimes he ordered again at a different date. All this is shown in the two tables that accompany this article, in which the details of the orders and the records are gathered. Through the study of the two tables, it is possible to make conclusions about the most popular repertoire of the time. The largest variety of records was Turkish, then Greek and Arabic.

Turkish records were the most popular and many of them were ordered in many copies. Some of the best sellers were the following: Zonophone (X-102267/X-103041) Uşşak gazel: Sana takrire by Nasip Efendi or Hanım accompanied by ut/oud & Uşşak Kanto: Rahm eyle bana by Mme. Victoria, recorded in Constantinople in 1903 and 1905 respectively, ordered in 5 copies.

Zonophone (X-102152/X-102151) Uşşak Şarkı: Düşünüp mihneti gayri n’idelim & Uşşak Gazel by Karakaş Efendi, recorded in Constantinople in 1905 and 1903 respectively, ordered in 8 copies.

Zonophone (X-102214/X-103030) Felek bana neler etti by Hafız Aşir Efendi & Saba Kanto: Meftûnlar by Mme. Victoria recorded in Constantinople in 1905, ordered in 14 copies.

Zonophone (X-2-102311/X-2-102271) Şevkevza Gazel: Bir gülün mecburuyum by Hafız Sami Efendi accompanied by keman/violin & Saba Şarkı: Mey içerken düştü aksın câmıma by Şahap Efendi recorded in Constantinople in 1907, ordered in 13 copies.

Zonophone (X-102770/X-109266) İki telli Gazel: Dilhanemi yıktın by Hafız Sami Efendi accompanied by Kemani İhsan in violin & Zeybek Peşrevi by Kemani İhsan in violin and İbrahim in oud/ut, recorded in Constantinople in 1906, ordered in 10 copies.

Some of the best sellers of the Greek records were the following: Zonophone (X-102199/X-102201): Αλή Πασά (Ali Pasha) & Νταβέλης (Davelis) by Ιωάννης Π. Αγιάσματζης (Ioannis P. Ayiasmatzis) accompanied by harmonica, recorded in Constantinople in 1905, ordered in 10 copies.

Zonophone (X-102211/X-109101): Κλεφτόπουλα (Kleftopoula) & Συρτό (Sirtó) by Ιωάννης Π. Αγιάσματζης (Ioannis P. Ayiasmatzis) accompanied by harmonica, recorded in Constantinople in 1905, ordered in 9 copies.

Zonophone (X-104561/X-104562): Ανδριάνα (Andriana)

& Τσομπάνης Κλέφτικο (Tsombanis Kleftiko) by A Greek Estudiantine, recorded in Constantinople in 1906, ordered in 8 copies.

Zonophone (X-102823/X-102828): Μανέ Πολίτικο: Πεξ μου αν είσαι ικανή νεκρού ζωή να μου δώσεις (Mane Politico: Pes mou an eisai ikani nekrou zoi na mou doseis) & Γαλατιανός Μανές: Δεν ήταν να μη σ' έβλεπα, απ' την αρχή πουλί μου (Galatianos Manes: Den itan na mi s'evlepa ar'tin arxhi rouli mou) by Πέτρος Ζουναράκης (Petros Zouarakis) accompanied by harmonica, mandolin, and guitar, recorded in Constantinople in 1906, ordered in 12 copies.

Zonophone (X-2-102339/X-104586): Γελούσαν τ'αστέρια (Gelousan t'asteria) by Antonis Melitsianos & Ελληνικός Ύμνος (Hellinikos Ymnos) by a Greek Estudiantine, recorded in Constantinople in 1907, ordered in 15 copies.

Zonophone (X-104579/X-104581): Με λησμόνησες σκληρά (Me lisonisises sklira) & Ήθελα να' βρω μια καρδιά (Ithela na' vrw mia kardia) by a Greek Estudiantine, recorded in Constantinople in 1907, ordered in 13 copies.

Zonophone (X-104578/X-104582): Αχ διατί να λησμονήσω (Ax diati na lisonisw) & Ξυπνώ την χαραυγή (Xyprnw tin charavyi) by a Greek Estudiantine, recorded in Constantinople in 1907, ordered in 11 copies.

The Arabic records were ordered only twice, in April and June. The best sellers were: Zonophone (X-102709/X-102710) Nokta Yi El Babor & Noukta Yi El Youmal by El Sayed el Eschta, recorded in Cairo in 1906, ordered in 8 copies and Zonophone (X-100539/X-100540) Marche Khediviale/ Boulboul Afrah by El Hag Ibrahim and Mozmar Cairo Orchestra, recorded in Cairo in 1906, ordered in 20 copies.

Smyrna, this crossroads of peoples and cultures, where the merchants ended up and the conquerors passed, and also countless ships from all the Mediterranean countries, carrying their riches, goods, mentalities, culture and ideas. Naturally, the region has always been cosmopolitan and has been a place of extensive exchange of products and ideas, material and spiritual elements of culture. This feature was retained until the 1922 Catastrophe, the last phase of the Asia Minor campaign, i.e. the end of the Greek-Turkish war of 1918-22, the flight from Turkey of the Greek administration, which had settled in Smyrna immediately after the Mudros armistice, as well as the retreat of the Greek army and the expulsion of a large part of the Greek and Christian population from Asia Minor, which had begun much earlier and which had been interrupted by the Mudros armistice.

After the destruction of Smyrna and the Armistice of Mudanya (October 11, 1922) and the evacuation of the Gallipoli peninsula (on November 11), as well the compulsory exchange of populations (1922-24) from all over Asia Minor and the arrival of 1,230,000 Greek Christians and 45,000 Armenian refugees in Greece, these events resulted in the complete destruction of Thracian and Asia Minor Hellenism. The catastrophe of 1922 created deep cuts in Greek society at all levels: economic (creation of a large working class in large urban centers), political (radicalization of political forces), as well as cultural (new music, cuisine, new spiritual pursuits) and literary currents, such as the generation of the '30s.

This cosmopolitan air, among other things, is clearly seen in the music of Asia Minor, which combines many elements, Greek and foreign, which is why it is considered special, unique and much loved until today. The elements that composed it, were mixed, worked and assimilated over the centuries, resulting in this special kind of Greek music that we call Smyrnaean song. Greeks, Turks, scholars, Europeans, Armenians, Jews, Persians, Arabs and generally every walnut left in Ionia some of their music. Everyone has put their stone in the incredible and impressive mosaic of the Smyrnaean music tradition, as we have known it for the last 200 years.

In the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, the music of the beaches of Asia Minor is present in every moment and in every event in the cycle of life, from birth to death, in neighborhoods and alleys, in homes and nightclubs, in work, in celebration and at the festival. It includes melodies and songs of three main categories: a) the original demotic songs, some of which are purely from Asia Minor, with many local variations, and others imported from mainland Greece or the islands, intact or more or less varied. b) urban songs, heavily influenced by European music. They are folk or eponymous compositions, coming from Smyrna, Constantinople, Athens or the Ionian Islands. And c) the songs of various composers, in the local style of the so-called Smyrnaean school, which continued its musical life in Athens, after 1922. And finally, songs of foreign origin, Italian and French, Armenian, Turkish, Hebrew, Arabic, Kurdish and Slavo-Romanian (Balkan), sometimes genuine and sometimes adapted to the Greek language and incorporated into the local style.

#### **Structure and terminology of Blumberg and the Discography Tables, both composed with the assistance of Hugo Strötbaum:**

The following document consists of a number of distinctive categories, divided over **seven** columns. Here is a description of the content of each column.

#### **column 1:**

##### **REFERENCE NUMBER (Ref. No.)**

The numbers in this column are only for easy reference.

#### **column 2:**

##### **COMPANY / LABEL**

In this column one finds the names of the two labels which are featured in this document:

GRAMO(PHONE) and ZONOPHONE

Label names of the **Gramophone Company**:

- GRAMOPHONE RECORD (17½ cm)
- GRAMOPHONE CONCERT RECORD /  
CONCERT RECORD GRAMOPHONE (25 cm)
- GRAMOPHONE MONARCH RECORD (30 cm)

Labels of **Zonophone**:

- DISQUE POUR ZONOPHONE (25 cm)

**column 3:****SIDE NUMBER (a)****MATRIX NUMBER (b)**

In this column one finds **two different numerical codes** as they may appear in varying combinations in the dead or empty wax of a record and on the actual record label. Each code has a different function.

**(a) Side number**

The term **side number** (or **face number**) is a unique number which identifies only one specific side of a record. It is found on the label and in the wax. Use of the ambiguous term “**catalogue number**” has been avoided, because that term may denote completely different things.

The much clearer term “*side number*” (or “*face number*”) is preferred. It is the number which identifies only one side of a record: it is **unique** for each side and is allocated when a record is issued. The Gramophone Company, like the German Favorite record company, used side numbers for storing extra information about size, language group and genre.

**(b) Matrix number**

The term **matrix number** (or master number) of a recording consists of a numerical part and in most cases is part of a consecutive numerical sequence. More often than not this numerical sequence represents the chronological order in which recordings were made. Matrix numbers were only meant for *internal* use: they made it possible to identify each recording for storage and during the production process.

When more than one recording of a title was made (an **alternate take**), an extra digit (½, -1, -2 or -3 etc.) was added to the matrix number to indicate a first, second or third take. Instead of a ‘2’ The Gramophone Company often used ‘½’ for a second take.

The **Gramophone Company** and **Favorite** used single letters as *suffixes*, to indicate the recording engineer and the record size (see **APPENDIX** at the bottom)

**column 4:****ON (ORDER NUMBER)****Q (QUANTITY)**

This column contains two categories:

(a) Order number (Coupling number) in printed catalogues  
In his orders Paul Blumberg made use of the side numbers in the printed catalogues issued by The Gramophone Company.

(b) The second number in this column (1x, 2x, 3x etc.) indicates how many copies of each record were ordered by Paul Blumberg.

**column 5:****RECORD SIZE**

This column contains information on the size of the record listed, both in centimeters (cm) and inches (“). In this discography three different record sizes can be found: 17½ cm (7”), 25cm (10”) and 30cm (12”).

**column 6:****TITLE & COMPOSER(S)****ARTIST(S) AND ACCOMPANIMENT****Title**

Turkish titles are presented in **modern Turkish spelling**. In other words, not the unofficial transliterations which pre-date the official spelling reform of 1929. Greek spellings of titles and names on record labels often vary, but never to the point that they are unrecognizable. They are presented here in modern Greek spelling. Since many readers may not be familiar with the Greek alphabet, transliterations of the Greek titles in the discography will be provided in the future.

**Composer(s)**

As for the absence of names of composers: many of the musical titles in this document are anonymous (traditional). The composer(s) of a title are shown between **curly brackets** (also called braces or squiggly brackets). For example: {Wagner}

**Artist(s) and accompaniment**

Greek names of artists/performers (first name and surname) on record labels are often presented in the genitive. In this discography the names of the artists are reproduced in the **nominative**. At a later stage, **latin script transliterations** of the Greek originals will be added, as many readers may not be familiar with the Greek alphabet.

**column 7:****RECORDING LOCATION****RECORDING DATE****RECORDING ENGINEER**

In most cases recording locations are known, either from corporate documents or from record labels. Locations on record labels do not always indicate the place where the recording was made but may rather where the artist(s) came from.

The availability of exact recording dates varies. In some cases, day/month/year are known, sometimes only month/year, or just the year.



**APPENDIX:  
IDENTIFICATION LETTERS & NAMES  
OF RECORDING ENGINEERS**

**GRAMOPHONE COMPANY & ZONOPHONE suffixes:**

a/b/c = Fred Gaisberg  
d/e/f = Will Gaisberg  
g/h/i = Sinkler Darby  
n/o/p = Franz Hampe  
q/r/s = Max Hampe  
t/u/v = Charlie Scheuplein

**Notes, Reference Periodicals, Newspapers and Books**

- <sup>1</sup>*The Treaty of Sevres (July 28 / August 10, 1920) was one of the peace treaties that followed the end of the First World War. Signed between the victors of World War I and the defeated Ottoman Empire, in the North of France. The Treaty of Sevres finalizes the end of the Ottoman Empire with the division of its territories, the birth of the Turkish state and the return to Greece of the claimed territories.*
- <sup>2</sup>Weber Jerome F., "Discography", Sadie Stanley (Ed.), *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians, 2nd Edition*, Macmillan, London 2001, pp. 376–380.
- <sup>3</sup>Pennanen Risto Pekka, "Commercial Recordings and Source Criticism in Music Research. Some Methodological Views", *Svensk tidskrift för musikforskning*, vol. 87, 2005, pp. 81–99.
- <sup>4</sup>Καλυβιώτη Αριστομένη, Σμύρνη: Η μουσική ζωή, 1900–1922: Η διασκέδαση, τα μουσικά καταστήματα, οι ηχογραφήσεις δίσκων, *Music Corner and Tinella*, Αθήνα 2002, σ. 40.
- <sup>5</sup>Αναγνωστοπούλου Σία, *Μικρά Ασία 19ος αι. – 1919, Οι ελληνορθόδοξες κοινότητες*, Ελληνικά Γράμματα, Αθήνα 1998, σσ. 307–308.
- <sup>6</sup>*Frangomachalás in Smyrna was the European street or Rue Franque that means the street of the Franks.*
- <sup>7</sup>Φάλμπος Φίλιππος Κ., *Ο Φραγκομαχαλάς της Σμύρνης. Ιστορική Μελέτη*, Εκδ. Ενώσεως Σμυρναίων, Αθήναι 1970, σ. 33.
- <sup>8</sup>*The colourful picture is available at: { <https://www.mixanitouxronou.gr/smyrni-1908-i-polyethniki-poli-ray-oi-eyro-pai-oi-epokaloy-san-quot-to-parisi-toy-le-vante-quot-kai-oi-toyko-i-quot-gkiasoy-izmir-quot-oi-ellines-itan-proti-se-rlithysmo-emporio-kai-grammata/> }*
- <sup>9</sup>Ανδρικού Νίκου, *Η εκκλησιαστική μουσική της Σμύρνης (1800–1922)*, β' έκδοση, Εκδ. Τόπος, Αθήνα 2015, σ. 45.
- <sup>10</sup>*More information about the use of the santour in Smyrna, see: Ταππή Χριστίνα, Το σαντούρι και η μουσική ζωή στη Σμύρνη από τα τέλη του 19ου αιώνα μέχρι και το 1922*, ΤΕΙ Ηπείρου, Αρτα, Οκτώβριος 2008.
- <sup>11</sup>Τρικούπη Αθανασίου – Μπαντέκα Δήμητρας, «Η διάδοση της δυτικής μουσικής στην Κωνσταντινούπολη από τους Έλληνες κατά το β' μισό του 19ου αιώνα», *9ο Διατμηματικό Μουσικολογικό Συνέδριο υπό της αιγίδα της Ελληνικής Μουσικολογικής Εταιρείας, Θεσσαλονίκη 1–3/12/2017*.
- <sup>12</sup>*Η Σμύρνη και η Σμυρνιά, Μουσική Παράσταση, Πανεπιστήμιο Ιωαννίνων – ΤΕΙ Ηπείρου, Ιωάννινα 8 Μαρτίου 2012.*
- <sup>13</sup>*Karamouza (sing.) is a Greek wind instrument that looks like a small trumpet with sharp and piercing sound.*
- <sup>14</sup>*The lanterna is a descendant of the automatic instruments that we find even in Antiquity. It produces music with a rotating cylinder with nails, with each of them producing a note. It takes about 800 hours to create and 7,000 nails for the 9 songs it plays.*
- <sup>15</sup>*See also the related reference in a Blumberg's letter in September 1908 below.*
- <sup>16</sup>Gronow Pekka, "The Record Industry comes to the Orient", *Ethnomusicology*, Vol. 25, No. 2, University of Illinois Press, May 1981, pp. 251–253 & Gronow Pekka, "The Recording Industry: An Ethnomusicological Approach", *Acta Universitatis Tampereensis*, Issue 504, University of Tampere 1996, pp. 19–20.
- <sup>17</sup>Perkins John F., Kelly Allan, Ward John, "On Gramophone Company Matrix Numbers, 1898 to 1921", *The Record Collector*, vol. 23, no. 3–4, 1976.
- <sup>18</sup>Barendregt Bart, Keppy Peter, Nordholt Henk Schulte, *Popular Music in South-east Asia. Banal Beats, Muted History*, Amsterdam University Press, Amsterdam 2017, pp. 20–21.
- <sup>19</sup>Los Leonora & Belchior Susana, "The introduction of phonogram market in Portugal: Lindström labels and local traders", in Gronow Pekka – Hofer Christiane (eds), *The Lindström Project: Contributions to the history of the record industry*, vol. 2, Wien 2010, pp. 67–72.
- <sup>20</sup>Jones Geoffrey, "The Gramophone Company: an Anglo-American Multinational, 1898–1931", *Business History Review*, no. 59, pp. 76–100 and Martland Peter, *A Business History of the Gramophone Company Ltd, 1897–1918*, Unpubl. Ph.D. diss., University of Cambridge, Cambridge 1992.

<sup>21</sup>Perkins John F., Kelly Allan, Ward John, "On Gramophone Company Matrix Numbers, 1898 to 1921", *The Record Collector*, vol. 23, no. 3–4, 1976, pp. 51–90.

<sup>22</sup>Ströbaum Hugo (Ed.), *The Fred Gaisberg Diaries, Part 1 & 2*, 2010 at [www.recordingpioneers.com](http://www.recordingpioneers.com)

<sup>23</sup>Ströbaum Hugo, 1904: *Will Gaisberg visits Constantinople. A Discography*, <http://www.recordingpioneers.com/grurks/index.php/his-masters-voice/will-gaisberg-in-constantinople-1904>

<sup>24</sup>Ludwig Wild: *From 1901 to 1905 Head of the Vienna Branch of The Gramophone and Typewriter Ltd. General Representative for Austria, Hungary, Balkan and Orient*. Ströbaum, *Ibid*.

<sup>25</sup>[http://www.recordingpioneers.com/RP\\_DARBY1.html](http://www.recordingpioneers.com/RP_DARBY1.html)

<sup>26</sup>[http://www.recordingpioneers.com/RP\\_HAMPE1.html](http://www.recordingpioneers.com/RP_HAMPE1.html)

<sup>27</sup>[http://www.recordingpioneers.com/RP\\_HAMPE2.html](http://www.recordingpioneers.com/RP_HAMPE2.html)

<sup>28</sup>*More about Franz and Max Hampe in Pennanen Risto Pekka, "Immortalised on Wax: Professional Folk Musicians and Their Gramophone Recordings Made in Sarajevo in 1907 and 1908" in Božidar Jezernik et al. (eds), Europe and Its Other: Notes on the Balkans, Filozofska fakulteta, Ljubljana 2007, pp. 107–148.*

<sup>29</sup>[http://www.recordingpioneers.com/RP\\_SCHEUPLEIN1.html](http://www.recordingpioneers.com/RP_SCHEUPLEIN1.html)

<sup>30</sup>[http://www.recordingpioneers.com/RP\\_WALCUTTI.html](http://www.recordingpioneers.com/RP_WALCUTTI.html)

<sup>31</sup>Wile Raymond, "Duplicates in the Nineties and the National Phonograph Company's Bloc Numbered Series", *ARSC Journal*, 2001, vol. 32, no. 2, p. 175.

<sup>32</sup>Sutton Allan, "The Leeds & Catlin Story", Mainspring Press (Archived), Mainspring Press, LLC. 2006.

<sup>33</sup>[http://www.recordingpioneers.com/RP\\_BLUMBERG1.html](http://www.recordingpioneers.com/RP_BLUMBERG1.html)

<sup>34</sup>*Neue Freie Presse*, Nr. 17164, Wien, Thursday 6 June 1912, p. 26.

<sup>35</sup>Καλυβιώτη Αριστομένη, Σμύρνη: Η μουσική ζωή, 1900–1922: Η διασκέδαση, τα μουσικά καταστήματα, οι ηχογραφήσεις δίσκων, *Music Corner and Tinella*, Αθήνα 2002, σσ. 56–57.

<sup>36</sup>*1888 Smyrna Commercial Guide*, p. 31.

<sup>37</sup>"Horlogers", *Annuaire oriental (ancien Indicateur oriental) du commerce, de l'industrie, de l'administration et de la magistrature*, A 10, Typographie et Lithographie J. Pallamary, Grand Rue de Péra, 403, Constantinople 1 Jan 1891, p. 817.

<sup>38</sup>"Nomenclature des Adresses de Smyrne", *Annuaire des commerçants de Smyrne et de l'Anatolie créé par Joseph L. Nalpas, Imprimerie Commercial G. Timoni & Co*, Smyrne 1893, p. 192.

<sup>39</sup>*Indicateur des professions commerciales et industrielles de Smyrne, Imprimerie Commercial G. Timoni & Co*, Smyrne 1896, p. 12.

<sup>40</sup>Φάλμπος Φίλιππος Κ., *Ο Φραγκομαχαλάς της Σμύρνης. Ιστορική Μελέτη*, Εκδ. Ενώσεως Σμυρναίων, Αθήναι 1970.

<sup>41</sup>Προκοπίου Σ., σ. 65.

<sup>42</sup>Παναγιώτης Φαρδούλης και Σία, *1901 Εμπορικός Οδηγός της Σμύρνης και των Περιχώρων*, Αμάλθεια, Σμύρνη 1901, σ. 113.

<sup>43</sup>"Gramophones", *Journal de Salonique*, A. 9, No. 839, Salonique 21 April 1904, p. 1.

<sup>44</sup>"Avis Important", *Journal de Salonique*, A. 9, No. 839, Salonique 21 April 1904, p. 4.

<sup>45</sup>"Avis Important", *Journal de Salonique*, A. 9, No. 850, Salonique 30 May 1904, p. 4.

<sup>46</sup>[http://www.recordingpioneers.com/RP\\_WEINBERG1.html](http://www.recordingpioneers.com/RP_WEINBERG1.html)

<sup>47</sup>"Ausgegeben Freitag", *Karlsbader Kurliste*, Nr. 335, 6 July 1906, p. 4.

<sup>48</sup>1909–1910 ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΟΣ ΕΜΠΟΡΙΚΟΣ ΟΔΗΓΟΣ ΤΗΣ ΤΟΥΡΚΙΑΣ, Βαμβακίδης Νικόλαος, Σμύρνη, σ. 87.

<sup>49</sup>*Catalogue de Disques a double face de la Compagnie Gramophone Ltd., Gde Rue Péra, 467 Constantinople, undated. Supplément Catalogue de Disques a double face de la Grammophon Company Ltd., S. Weinberg, Grande Rue de Péra 467, Constantinople, undated. The Gramophone Company Limited, Γενικός Κατάλογος των Ελληνικών Δίσκων Ζώνοφων με δύο όψεις, November 1908 and November 1909. Hugo Ströbaum Archive.*

<sup>50</sup><http://www.recordingpioneers.com/grurks/index.php/tanburi-ce-mil-bey-1871-1916/catalogues/the-gramophone-company>

<sup>51</sup>*One of the earliest versions of the compressed air gramophones was the Auxetophone. More information about it is available here: { <https://web.archive.org/web/20100918210354/http://www.aqpl43.dsl.pipex.com/MUSEUM/COM-MS/auxetophone/auxetoph.htm#aux> }*

<sup>52</sup>*The record in question is "Yelousan t'asteria" (from "Tosca" by Puccini) issued as ZONOPHONE X-2-102339 and GRAMOPHONE 14-12941 (matrix number: 10577 u)*

<sup>53</sup>Fabbri Franco, "A Mediterranean Triangle: Naples, Smyrna, Athens", *Mediterranean Postcards*, Plastino G. and Sciorra J. (ed.), MD: Rowman & Littlefield, Lanham 2016, pp. 29–44.

<sup>54</sup>Καφερείον του Συντάγματος, Αμάλθεια, Αριθ. 9070, Δευτέρα 4 Αυγούστου 1908, σ. 2.

<sup>55</sup>[http://www.recordingpioneers.com/RP\\_VOGEL1.html](http://www.recordingpioneers.com/RP_VOGEL1.html)



Fig. 1. Map of Smyrna, c. 1900

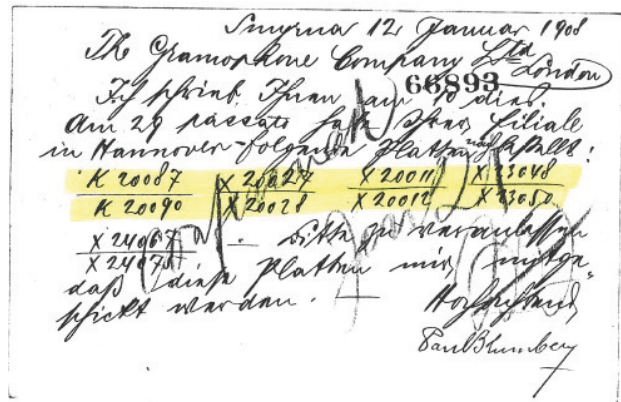


Fig. 3B. Blumberg letter on 12 January 1908 (reverse)

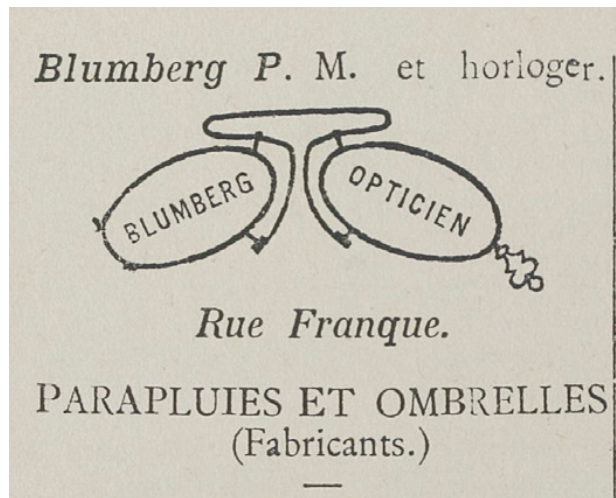


Fig. 2. Annuaire des commercants de Smyrne 1893, p.331

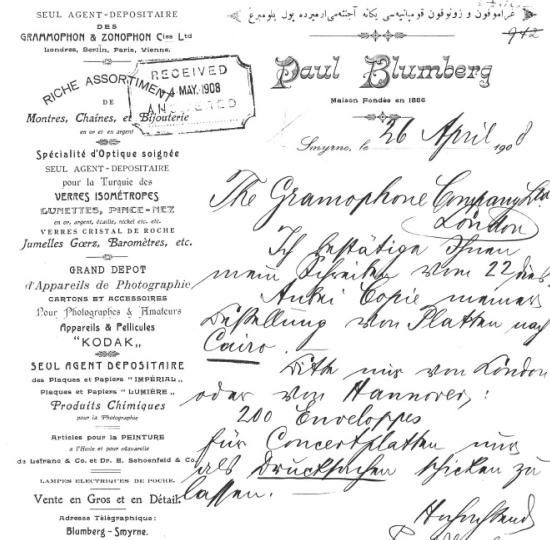


Fig. 4. Blumberg letter on 26 April 1908, first page

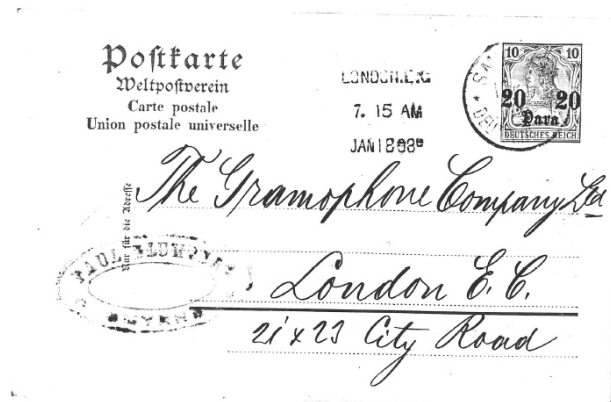


Fig. 3A. Blumberg letter on 12 January 1908

Copy of order to Cairo for records  
Please send from London or Hannover  
200 Envelopes for Concert Records  
by book post