



OBJECT ID	2015.4.11.D
OBJECT NAME	Record, Phonograph
OBJECT ENTITIES	Raethz, Betty (is related to) Katomeritiko, (is related to) Kritikos, Harilaos (is related to)
ACCESS POINTS	Musc Orthophonis Phonograph Record Victor Records

#### OBJECT DESCRIPTION

Circular, two sided record. In the center of the record is a black lable with light green writing. On the top, printed so the word follows the curve of the record, reads "Orthophonic" There is an opening in the very center of the record and to the right reads "S-477-B" Under the opening is the titla of the record along with names of people involved:

"Lowlander-Pentozali"

"Katomeritiko"

"Harilaos Kritikos"

Under this, bordering the bottom of the lable, in two rows reads "Manfuactured uner RCA U.S. Patent 2130239" "Made by RCA Victor Division of Radio Corporation of America Camden, New Jersey, U.S.A."

On side number two it has the exact same labe as the one above with a few differences. At the right of the opening this side reads "S-477-A" and the the title reads:

"Demonical"

"Cretan Syrto"

"Demonismenos"

"Harilaos Kritikos"

#### ORIGIN

In 1924 Berliner was acquired by its U.S. "relative", Victor, Herbert Berliner having left to run his Compo Company. The only immediately visible change was a slightly altered label, somewhat more like the U.S. label, with the "Victor" more prominent than the "His Master's Voice" (not remarkably) and the manufacturer's name brought up to date. Gradually, though, the already slowed pace of issue of the Montreal- recorded 216000 series slowed still further, until no more than about 15 records per year appeared, with no more than half of those being popular material. The Canadian operation, in fact, functioned much like any of the U.S. operations, with some exceptions of interest. The catalogues (that is, the available records, not the books listing them) were similar, although not identical. Much of the ethnic material was not issued in Canada. Sadly, this apparently included much of the so-called "race" catalogue of interest to today's collectors, although most if not all of the "folk" material appears to have been pressed here. The Canadian operation also continued the issue of the 216000 series, as noted, as well as a larger number of 263000 French-Canadian records and the 120000 series from English masters.

In the spring of 1925, Victor introduced their "Orthophonic" electrically-recorded records - as also did Columbia. Oddly enough, these were not the first electric records, as Chicago's Marsh Laboratories had used electrically-recorded masters on their rare Autograph label in 1924. In the U.S., both Victor and Columbia agreed to issue the new records in all-but-secrecy, with Victor's electric sides indicated only by an inconspicuous "V.E." in an oval in the run-out area. In Canada, however, Victor records bore the "V.E." in large print on the label, from the first issue onward, and sleeves and other promotional material advertised the new "V.E. Process" records without commenting on what the V.E. Process was! After 1926, when the Orthophonic Victrolas were used, and U.S. dealers began selling the records as "Orthophonic", the "Process" on the label was changed to "Orthophonic". The Canadian series, in fact, received new number series, starting at 216500, 263500 and 120800 for the various series. This created an odd situation for the 216000 series as the delay in introducing recording in Montreal (the first 216500's were recorded in Camden!) Allowed the acoustic series to reach 216499, and the last acoustic sides appeared on a 216700 series. While it is not verified, one possible reason for the more obvious introduction of electric recording in Canada is that Compo had, in fact, "beaten them to the punch", having been testing electric recording (possibly through their connections with Marsh labs?) and recording sides for issue in January or February 1925! It is also not recorded what their dealers thought, as they were left with a stock of "old fashioned" records - the reason why the U.S. companies elected to introduce the new records quietly.

There were still a handful of items in the Canadian catalogue that did not have U.S. counterparts. One of the most unusual is a sample record, with an acoustic side and an electric side, containing the same performance. Additionally, there were still some issues coupling different sides than the U.S. issue; apparently it was felt that some songs would not sell here! Another odd item are the handful of electrical versions of popular acoustic records not remade in the U.S. Those remade in the U.S. were simply assigned a new number (except for Vernon Dalhart's "Wreck of the Old 97" which kept the number 19427, since Victor, or Dalhart, apparently felt it unwise to confuse their country customers.) Those remade only in Canada kept their old number, with a "1" added in front to indicate the new version. However, someone in charge of numbering apparently became confused for there are a few electric records (most notably, at least two Paul Robeson items) on which the number was altered without any change in the record! Not only was this incorrect, but it left at least one item with a 120000 number duplicating an earlier and apparently forgotten issue. This creates one intriguing item, also. My collection includes an electric version of 19621, issued in the U.S. as an acoustic record, but not bearing the "1" indicating a remake. This may indicate that 19621 was issued in an electric version in Canada ahead of what is usually identified as the first electric issue of 19626!

The Victor parent company in the U.S. had been working closely with R.C.A., even to the point of selling RCA radios under the Victor name; most, needless to say, included phonographs. Finally in 1929 RCA acquired the Victor Talking Machine Company and merged the two under the familiar RCA Victor name (and no, they did not replace Nipper's gramophone with a cathedral-type radio!). In the boom times of 1929, with records selling at least fairly well and radios selling at a great rate, all looked well for the newly-organized firm. However, change was lurking just ahead.

## CITATION

Record, Phonograph, *National Hellenic Museum*, <https://hellenic.whirlhost.com/Detail/objects/>. Accessed 05/12/24.