

The Search For Greek Music's Past In N. America

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CHICAGO- Between 1896 and 1942, at least 2,000 individual commercial recordings of Greek music were produced in the United States. That is what we know. What we don't know is how many commercial records of Greek music were imported during that same period. Given economic and psychological factors Greeks in the United States proved avid consumers of Greek music during this period. A further dimension to this broader puzzle is that the accepted figure of 2,000 individual records does not include every small independent company, then, in operation in the United States up to 1945. Since, in point of fact, no one can honestly say how many of those small companies actually existed. That we even know that these as yet to be fully accounted for small companies existed is itself only the result of the odd bit of surviving ephemera and/or the chance remark during an oral history interview.

In like measure sheet music, instrument makers, the lives of professional musicians, the role(s) of amateur musicians in their home communities, the enduring role of Greek cafes and restaurants in American life, the continuing role of music among Greeks in the United States and other related issues are equally subjects little or never studied. All this in the face of the ever growing popularity of Greek music produced and/or targeted

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