

WOMEN AND GENDER RELATIONS IN THE RECORD INDUSTRY IN CROATIA FROM 1927 TO THE END OF THE 1950S

ABSTRACT

This paper represents an initial exploration into the gender relations and the position of women in the record industry in Croatia from 1927 to the end of 1950s. This period encompasses the 78 rpm shellac gramophone records in the production of three Zagreb-based record companies: Edison Bell Penkala (founded in 1926, but operational from 1927 to the second half of the 1930s), Elektroton (1938-1945) and Jugoton (founded in 1947). At the same time, it is a period of great social and political turmoil.

Using several illustrative examples and focusing on gender relations and intersectionality, I shall examine historical continuity and changes in what I elsewhere called record “filters”, namely the choice of musical repertoire and interpreters for record releases, production possibilities and aspirations, musicians’ working conditions and ways of market placement. It is supposed that they represent important components for understanding the overall dynamics, hierarchy and tendencies in music and musical life, as well as the wider social and cultural values of the periods in question. In line with the symposium theme on voicing resistance and building resilience, a special attention will be given to the issue of how participants in local music industry of the three periods in question (pre-, during and after the WWII) negotiated, challenged or resisted the dominant gender narratives.

