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Athens – Utrecht, 29 Aug 2021

Dino Foà

b. 10 Dec 1862, Parma, ITALY

d. 15 Jan 1957, Milan, ITALY

Nationality: Italian

Marriage: 15 Nov 1890, Florence, ITALY

Spouse: Ester Rouf

b. 31 Jan 1871, Florence, ITALY

d. 10 Nov 1947, Milan, ITALY

Children:

1) Alberto Foa

b. 20 Oct 1891, Rome, ITALY

d. 4 Aug 1944, Auschwitz, POLOGNE

2) Mario Foa

b. 24 Aug 1894,

d.

3) Lorenzo Foa

b. 7 Jan 1897, Milan, ITALY

d. 31 Jan 1990, Milan, ITALY

4) Ruggiero Foa

b. 5 Jul 1902, Milan, ITALY

d. 11 Oct 1983, Como, ITALY

5) Giovanna Foa

b. 27 May 1910, Milan, ITALY

d. Dec 1997, Milan, ITALY

1933:

Foa Ferruccio, 67y, *Lawyer*. Brother: **Ing. Dino Foa**, Milano, ITALY

Foa Finzi Bice, 58y, accompanied by the husband

Dep.: 14 Jul 1933, Naples, ITALY

Arr.: 25 Jul 1933, NY, USA

SS: "VULCANIA"

1943:

Dino Foa, b. 10 Dec 1862

Arr.: 10 Dec 1943, SWITZERLAND

*No

Parents:

Father: Cesare Ezechia Foa

b. 18 Jan 1826, Cortemaggiore, ITALY

d. 16 Mar 1902, Naples, ITALY

Mother: Ester Adelaide Fontanella

b. 3 Aug 1832, Parma, ITALY

d. 16 Mar 1907, Naples, ITALY

Marriage: 1856, Cortemaggiore, ITALY

Children:

1) Alberto Jeuda Scelomo Foa

b. 19 Oct 1857, Parma, ITALY

d. 29 Jul 1885, Parma, ITALY

2) Bice Batsheva Foa

b. 10 Jul 1858, Mantova, ITALY

d. 1905, Naples, ITALY

3) Camillo Schemuel Foa

b. 25 Dec 1860, Cortemaggiore, ITALY

d. 21 Aug 1939, Naples, ITALY

4) **Dino Daniel Foa**

b. 10 Dec 1862, Parma, ITALY

d. 15 Jan 1957, Milan, ITALY

5) Eugenio Avishua Foa

b. 16 Oct 1864, Parma, ITALY

d. 21 Feb 1928, Naples, ITALY

6) Ferruccio Efraim Foa

b. 4 Oct 1866, Parma, ITALY

d. 13 Jul 1944, San Remo, ITALY

7) Gilda Foa

b. 1868, Parma, ITALY

d. 9 May 1932, Milan, ITALY

8) Icilio Idel Zrcharia Foa

b. 21 May 1871, Parma, ITALY

d.

9) Jone Foa

b. 10 Jul 1873, Parma, ITALY

d.

10) Lamberto Yeudiel Foa

b. 3 Feb 1878, Parma, ITALY

d. 1965,

An Italian firm, established in Milan in 1904. The original owners were **Michaelis, Foa and Co.** Ownership passed to Fonotipia London Ltd. In 1906, then to Carl Lindström AG of Berlin, in 1911. The Transoceanic Trading Co., Netherlands, acquired the firm in 1920. It came under control of the Columbia Graphophone Co., Ltd., in 1925, and thence went to EMI, Ltd., in 1931.

Fonotipia was set up to compete with the Gramophone Co. (Italy) Ltd., of which Alfred Michaelis had been general manager. He left in summer of 1904, under disagreeable circumstances, and created the Fonotipia rival ca. October 1904, with engineer **Dino Foa** as his partner. It seems that the new firm was also the Italian agent for F. M. Prescott's Odeon records. Fonotipia's first records,

11 single-sided discs, appeared in 1905. It produced some 360 sides by November 1905. Artists included Alessandro Bonci, Victor Maurel, Giovanni Zenatello, and violinist Jan Kubelik.¹

The Italian Society of Fonotipia was founded on 12 October 1904 by Alfredo Michäelis and **Dino Foà**. The company was transformed into "Italian Society of Fonotipia in Accomandita" in February 1905, increasing the capital and introducing personalities, "as limited partners", such as Baron Frederic d'Erlanger (1868-1943) and the Italian composer Umberto Giordano, who will soon become the artistic manager of the company. The label was formed expressly to record celebrities, mainly opera singers. A recent re-release of some titles states that it was formed as part of the International Talking Machine Company of Berlin. The recording method was of the usual type, with lateral incision of the stylus (rare the recordings with vertical incision), starting from the outer edge and reproducing the sound at the speed of about 78 rpm.

As early as (late) September 1904, the sound engineers of the International Talking Machine Co. had been recording all the records for Michaelis and **Foa's** company, which was still in the preparatory phase, first in Milan and shortly afterwards in Paris and Berlin. The new company should be called "Fonotipia".

On 6 February 1905 was based out of the partnership between Michaelis and **Foa** of Milan music publisher *Società Italiana di Fonotipia* indicate Germanized *Italian Society of Art sound pressure*. The International Talking Machine Co. mbH continued to record the artists under contract with Fonotipia, pressed their records and sold them in Germany. The music publisher Fonotipia, Via Dante 4, in turn owned the Italian general distributor for Odeon records.

¹ Hoffmann Frank (Ed.), "Societ Italiana di Fonotipia", *Encyclopedia of Recorded Sound*, 2nd Edition, Routledge, NY 2005, pp. 410-411.

Andrews Frank H., "Fonotipia Founded", *The Talking Machine Review*, No. 40, June 1976, pp. 692-696.

On 12th October 1904, Michaelis entered into an agreement with an engineer named Dino Foa, whereby 25% of the surplus profits of the business of manufacturers and dealers in disc records and other items associated with the reproduction of sound, and of music publishers, which they owned in partnership, was payable to them. In my opinion this agreement must be taken as the founding of the Fonotipia records enterprise.

Two days after Kenneth Muir, the new manager of the Gramophone Company (Italy) Ltd., had informed the London office about the new Odeon Records in Italy, Alfred Michaelis and **Dino Foa** entered an agreement (on 15th January 1905) with the composer and conductor Umberto Giordano, under which he was to receive a percentage of the surplus net profits of the Fonotipia enterprise. Perhaps it is justifiable to claim that Giordano's engagement as Musical Advisor and Director for the Fonotipia recordings commenced from this date.

Andrews Frank H., "The Directors of Fonotipia Limited", *The Talking Machine Review*, No. 41, August 1976, pp. 741-746.

Fonotipia Limited was formed on the basis of two agreements.

The first was signed on 11th April 1906, and was between, on the one part, the Società Italiana di Fonotipia in Accomandita, Milano (**Michaelis, Foa and Company**) and, on the second part Mr, William Rowland Hart acting on behalf of Fonotipia Limited of London, for which he was Company Secretary.

By this agreement, Fonotipia Limited bought the business and Goodwill of the Società Italiana di Fonotipia, of Milan and elsewhere, which included the Trade Marks, Licenses, Copyrights, Plant, Machinery, Stock-in-Trade, Furniture, Implements and Utensils, all Book Debts, all Contracts, all Shares, Cash at the Bank, Bills and Notes and all Other Property, EXCEPTING the Premises which were situate in Milan and the furniture and fixings therein, and a Contract valid between Tito Ricordi, of the music

publishing house, and the Società Italiana di Fonotipia dated 12th April 1905 The stock-in-trade, extant up to 31st December 1905 was also not included in the purchase.

It will be noted that the name of **Dino Foa**, a Partner with Michaelis when the enterprise was founded in October 1904, was not included as one having a financial interest in the business on 11th April 1906.

The second agreement was signed the next day, on 12th April 1906, between, on the one part, Messrs H. V. Higgins, F.R. Queirazza, Michaelis, **Foa**, and Baron d' Erlanger, and on the other part by Company Secretary, William Rowland Hart, acting on behalf of Fonotipia Limited, (which was for the take-over of the Company, as distinct from its business).

Under this second agreement, the above five gentlemen were required to transform the Società Italiana di Fonotipia in Accomandita (**Michaelis, Foa & Company**) (now shorn of its business) into a Società Anonima* under Italian law. The shares of this new Italian Company were then to be sold to Fonotipia Limited for the sum of £4,000. This again was to be met by the allocation of fully paid up shares in Fonotipia Limited. The shares were allocated to Baron d' Erlanger and F.R. Queirazza, H. V. Higgins, A. Michaelis and **D. Foa**. The shares were numbered 32,601 to 36,600. Michaelis, d' Erlanger and Higgins signed in London, while Foa and Queirazza signed in Milan witnessed by the British Vice Consul there. The transformation of the Società Italiana di Fonotipia into a Società Anonima was to be carried through only after Fonotipia Limited had received its Certificate of Incorporation, when the Lire-valued share-holding would be replaced by the Sterling shares for the stockholding of the Italian Company now completely the subsidiary of Fonotipia Limited, except for the premises occupied at 4. Via Dante, Milan.

On 13th April 1906, an Agreement was entered into between, on the one part, Michaelis, **Foa** and Giordano, and on the other part Fonotipia Limited, whereby for the sum of £5,000 in fully paid up shares to that value in Fonotipia Limited, Michaelis and **Foa** relinquished their rights to 25% of the surplus net profits of the Società Italiana di Fonotipia, Milano, which they held by the Agreement entered into on 12th October, 1904, and Giordano relinquished his rights to 10 % of the surplus profits in the same business, which he held by the Agreement of 15th January 1905.

A Share Statement of 13th August 1906 showed that of the 50,000 £1 shares available, 37,600 had been allotted and disposed of as follows - 23,905 had been issued as "fully paid up", which number included the 12,680 shares awarded to those who had an interest in the original company founded in 1904, and whose business had been sold to Fonotipia Limited; 6,225 issued as fully paid up as commission for guaranteeing the subscriptions; 5,000 to Alfred Michaelis, **Dino Foa** and Giordano, for forfeiture of their rights and 13,695 subscribed for cash at £1 each.

Andrews Frank H., "Fonotipia Fragmenta", *The Talking Machine Review*, No. 44, February 1977, pp. 901-746.

Mr. [Kenneth] Muir thereupon formed a new orchestra similar to that with which he was familiar, and with it proposed to record excerpts from Ponchielli's "La Gioconda" and a complete version of "La Boheme". His activities met with the distinguished opposition of Maestro Giordano whose own orchestra would have become redundant. Dino Foa, one of the original partners of the founding Italian Company, at that time in charge of artistes' contracts was reported to have been distressed by Mr. Muir's interference with the repertoire.

Of the 70,000 £1 shares available, 58,000 had been issued with another 2,000 to go to Emil Rink, the General Manager, on 31st. August, under the terms of the agreement of January 1907, appointing Rink to that post. G. Ricordi & Co had increased its

shareholding by about 25%* Alfred Michaelis had rid himself of 55 shares and Dino Foa, the other co-founder of the Fonotipia records, had divested himself of 1,040 shares, leaving him with 60 only. The Ullmann business had increased its holdings by 962 shares. On 31st. August Emil Rink received his bonus of 2,000 shares in Fonotipia Limited having completed his four years of General Managership for the Company. It is not known if he received a new contract with Fonotipia Limited when a subsidiary of Carl Lindström AG.

Andrews Frank H., "Fonotipia", *The Talking Machine Review*, No. 56-57, April 1979, p. 1481.

It will be recalled that a contract had been entered into between Ricordi and Co. and the partners Alfred Michaelis, Dino Foa and Umberto Giordano, the composer, who then were the Società Italiana di Fonotipia at the date of signing, which was 12th April 1905.

When the new British company, Fonotipia Limited took over the business, one year later, on 11th April 1906, this Contract was not included in the assets purchased. Seventeen days later Fonotipia Ltd. itself entered into a Contract with G. Ricordi & Co. accepting fully paid-up shares to the value of 85,000 Lire in the British company and accepting the equivalent of £500 for the relinquishing of its Contract with the original Società Italiana di Fonotipia in Accomandita (Michaelis, Foa & Co.) of Milan. The 1905 Contract had given the Fonotipia business exclusive right to record the musical works of the composers which were published by Ricordi, which included important composers as Verdi and Puccini.

Andrews Frank H., "The British Record Industry during the reign of king Edward VII: 1901-1910", *Hilandale News*, No. 201, December 1994, p. 175.

Alfred Michaelis remained in Milan and teamed up with an engineer called Dino Foa. Having close connections with Ricordi, the Italian music publishing house, with Giordano the composer

and conductor, with the La Scala Theatre, Milan's management and also with a number of its singers, Alfred Michaelis founded a recording business in October, which by January 1905 took the name of la Società italiana di Fonotipia In Accomandita, Milano. There is documentary evidence which suggest that through this new company he intended to put The Gramophone Co. (Italy) Ltd. out of business; more of this later.

Andrews Frank H., "The British Record Industry during the reign of king Edward VII: 1901-1910", *Hilandale News*, No. 202, February 1995, pp. 212-213.

A new British disc record company was registered in April 1906, Fonotipia Limited. This company, backed by D'Erlanger's Merchant Banking House of Bishopsgate, London E.C., Harry Higgins, the Director of The Royal Opera Covent Garden, Tito Ricordi of the Ricordi and Co., music score publishers, and some Italian bankers, purchased the business of A. Michaelis, Dino Foa and Umberto Giordano registered in Italy as la Società italiana di Fonotipia in Accomandita (Michaelis, Foa and Company), Milano, which became the Italian branch of the British company. It did however retain its own Italian corporate existence and undertook the contracting of most of the Italian artistes in continuance of its former activities. An innovative feature of its discs in 1905 had been the introduction of singlesided record 35cm (133/4") which, being recorded and pressed by the Odeon engineers and Berlin factory, reflected the same type of disc which Odeon itself had introduced, Odeon in Germany being the German agency for the Fonotipia discs. In Paris, Ullmann Frères acted in a similar capacity for France in both the Odeon and Fonotipia records. Ullmann's were also the contracting agency for French artiste's recordings. By the time the new 1906-1907 season arrived, some Fonotipia discs were being pressed at the Crystalate Works in Kent.

Giovanni Lasi, *La produzione cinematografica nel sistema economico-industriale italiano tra il 1908 e il 1914. Il caso della Milano Films*,

Alma Mater Studiorum – Università di Bologna, Esame finale anno 2012, p. 200.

Another person who in all likelihood can boast direct relations with the interlocutors of Film d'Art is the Milanese engineer **Dino Foà**, whose presence is indicated by a restricted meeting between the members of the Promotion Committee of the Hesperia Cinematographers Society; eng. Dino Foà, only a few months later, will join the first Board of Directors of the F.A.I.

Simone Dotto, *Un moderno sentire. Fonografia e culture dell'ascolto in Italia dai primi anni del Novecento alla fondazione della Discoteca di Stato*, Università Degli Studi di Udine, 2017-2018, p. 150.

Following the successful example of Caruso, the voices of opera will soon form a separate sector of record production, by far the most requested by the Italian sessions. Sniffing the deal, in 1904 the man from Gramophone in Milan Alfred Michaelis left the London company and together with the technician **Dino Foà** founded the Italian Society of Phonotyping [= Fonotipia], to which they would later belong as financiers and partners with decision-making skills (or "limited partners", by contractual formula) the baron Frederic d'Erlanger and the composer Umberto Giordano.