

Description and Rationale

Title

Digitization of the semi-annual catalogues and release sheets for gramophone records from colonial India.

Project Description*

This project will result in digital images of the microfilmed copies of EMI catalogues of Indian music recordings and the corresponding release sheets. The catalogues proposed encompass the years 1905 through 1930. In addition to recordings made by [Reasons for](#)

Consideration*

The catalogues document the overwhelming majority of all gramophone recordings released in colonial India through 1930. Those recordings included vocal and instrumental music of all varieties, dramatic performances, and speeches including large numbers of humorous stories in many languages. The catalogues are a primary source for understanding sonic culture of South Asia. They will be immediately valuable to ethnomusicologists, anthropologists, linguists, historians, and others for whom the audible world of early twentieth-century India is a component of their research.

Authors

HMV, Zonophone, Twin, and other gramophone recording companies in India were corporate authors of the printed catalogues.

Publishers

The EMI in collaboration with the National Sound Archive produced the microfilm. The National Sound Archive is now incorporated into the British Library.

Proposal Contributors

James Nye, University of Chicago Library; G. Sundar, Roja Muthiah Research Library; and Will Prentice, Sound Archive, British Library

Details and Sources

Resource Types*

- Other – publisher’s catalogues of gramophone recordings

Regions*

- South Asia

[In addition to this proposal to SAMP, I intend to submit comparable proposals to SEAM and CAMP. The intention is to create the base for a rich understanding of audio culture in the Indian Ocean region.]

Countries of Origin*

Colonial India, Nepal, and Ceylon

Major Languages

All of the major classical and regional languages of the South Asian subcontinent.

Source Format*

- Microfilm

Target Format

Digital

Source and Holdings

Please see the attached appendix enumerating the microfilm reels and their contents held by the British Library.

Physical Details

The proposed digitization encompasses 30,964 microfilm images.

Existing Reformatted Materials

The University of Chicago Library will donate approximately 6,400 images digitized from the same microfilm source, created as a test. None of those images duplicate what is proposed here.

Intellectual Property Considerations

Both the British Library and EMI have agreed in writing to the digitization of the microfilm for non-commercial public presentation. Both organizations expect to be credited as the source of the microfilm and expect that each will be offered copies of the resulting digital images.

Appendix

EMI MUSIC ARCHIVE
Microfilm Index - British Library

35mm Films, Indian Catalogues

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Reel No	Contents	Comments	Exposures
494	"	1905-18	753
495	"	1907-08	772
496	"	1908-09	744
497	"	1909-10	792
498	"	1910-11	795
499	"	1911-12	797
500	"	1912-13	789
501	"	1913-14	765
502	"	1914-16	808
503	"	1916-17	822
504	"	1918-19	816
505	"	1919-20	824
506	"	1920-21	808
507	"	1921	822
508	No reel of this number		
509	Indian	1921-22	814
510	"	1922	814
511	"	1922-23	825
512	"	1923	835
513	"	1923-24	824
514	"	1924	814
515	"	1924-25	825
516	"	1925	839
517	"	1925	836
518	"	1925-26	830
519	"	1926	831
520	"	1926	743
521	"	1926	835
522	"	1926	820
523	"	1926-27	845
524	"	1927	833
525	"	1927	834
526	"	1927	843
527	"	1927-28	848
528	"	1928	830
529	"	1928	830
529	"	1928	840
530	"	1928	830
531	"	1928	839