

**THE LOCALIZED
HISTORY PROJECT**

@AAARI-CUNY

EDUCATOR GUIDE

**Indo-Trinidadian Music,
Migration, and Resistance
in NYC**

A NOTE FROM THE YOUTH RESEARCHER:

WHY TEACH THIS HISTORY

Hi, my name is Guinevere!

I was born and raised in Kensington, Brooklyn and am half Polish and half Indo-Trinidadian. Ever since I was little I've always loved to play, listen, and create music. When I was in elementary school I played the clarinet and was an honorary member of my school's junior band. Then, in middle school I began playing the harp. I loved the way that music was a mode of expression and outlet to discovery. I understood music as a universal language among all cultures and questioned the way it functioned within my own community. This prompted my interest in researching music as a mode of cultural expression and preservation.

This project aims to highlight the evolution of Indo-Trinidadian music throughout the diaspora and migration to New York City. It centers curriculum around women-lead movements and stories. Through conducting oral histories of second, third, and fourth generation Indo-Trinidadians I was able to determine the ways that music has played a role in shaping intergenerational experiences. Moreover, it taught me that there is so much "fresh" history and emotion within our communities that isn't taught in school curriculum. While focusing on artists like Lata Mangeshkar and Drupatee Ramgoonai I was able to discover the way that music has shaped the identities and lived experiences of many Indo-Trinidadians.

From this exhibit, students will develop a deeper understanding in the way that music has molded the Indo-Trinidadian identity. I hope that this project will challenge the way that Caribbean history is taught in schools as well as narratives about indenture. Students will learn about cultural fusion and the way assimilation and broader systemic pressures can affect identity. Most importantly, I hope to inspire students to understand that history makes up the world around you and to question, ask, and learn more about the lived memory of your community.

Thank you for engaging with my work!

Guinevere Wolski is a 16 year old student at Brooklyn Technical High School who is majoring in Law and Society. Growing up in the NYC public school system, she noticed the lack of Indo-Caribbean representation in the school curriculum. This prompted her interest in The Localized History Project and contributing to NYC's first AAPI curriculum as a Youth Researcher. Outside of school she spends her time playing the harp for Brooklyn Tech's orchestra which sparked her interest in the role that music has played throughout history, across various communities.

PEDAGOGICAL REVOLUTIONS

HOW TO TEACH THIS HISTORY



Compare and Contrast:

Students can analyze the lyrics, rhythms, and diction by both artists to determine and/or discover key historical themes. We urge students to bridge ideas and form connections to historical events.



Analyze Doolarie's story:

To move beyond dates and statistics and build emotional connections with history, have students read and interact with Doolarie's story. It should be treated as a way to uplift her resilience, and combat dominant narratives about indenture.



Composer "Meet and greets":

Have students research Indo-Trinidadian artists' music, lives, and stories. It gives them the opportunity to not only learn about their musicality, but also their lived experiences. Students can then present their findings to the class and have the chance to teach their peers about a selected artist.



Personalized history:

Have students research music in their own family's history. See what kind of connections they can make regarding music's tool in their families lives.

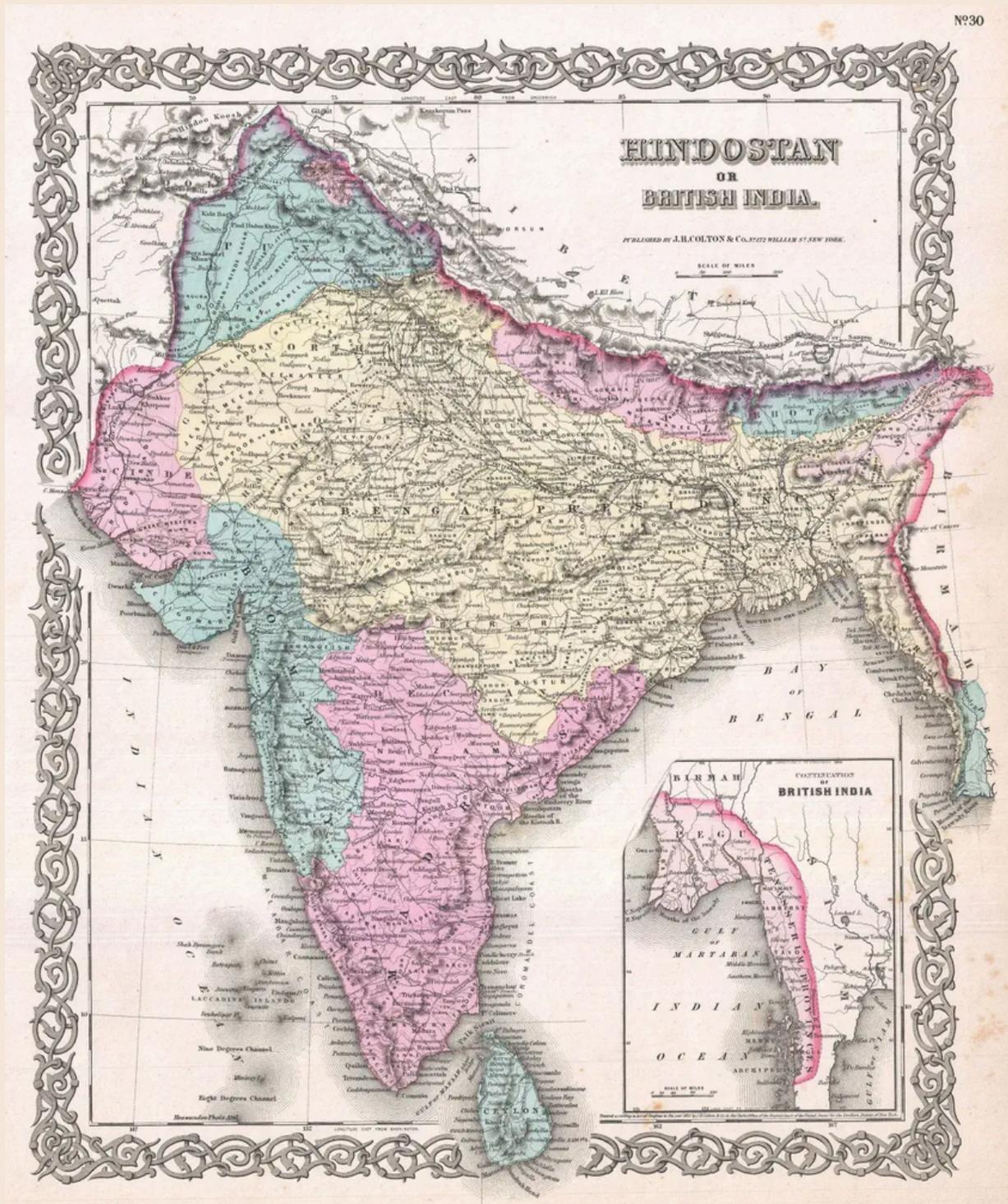
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RESOURCES FOR THE CLASSROOM

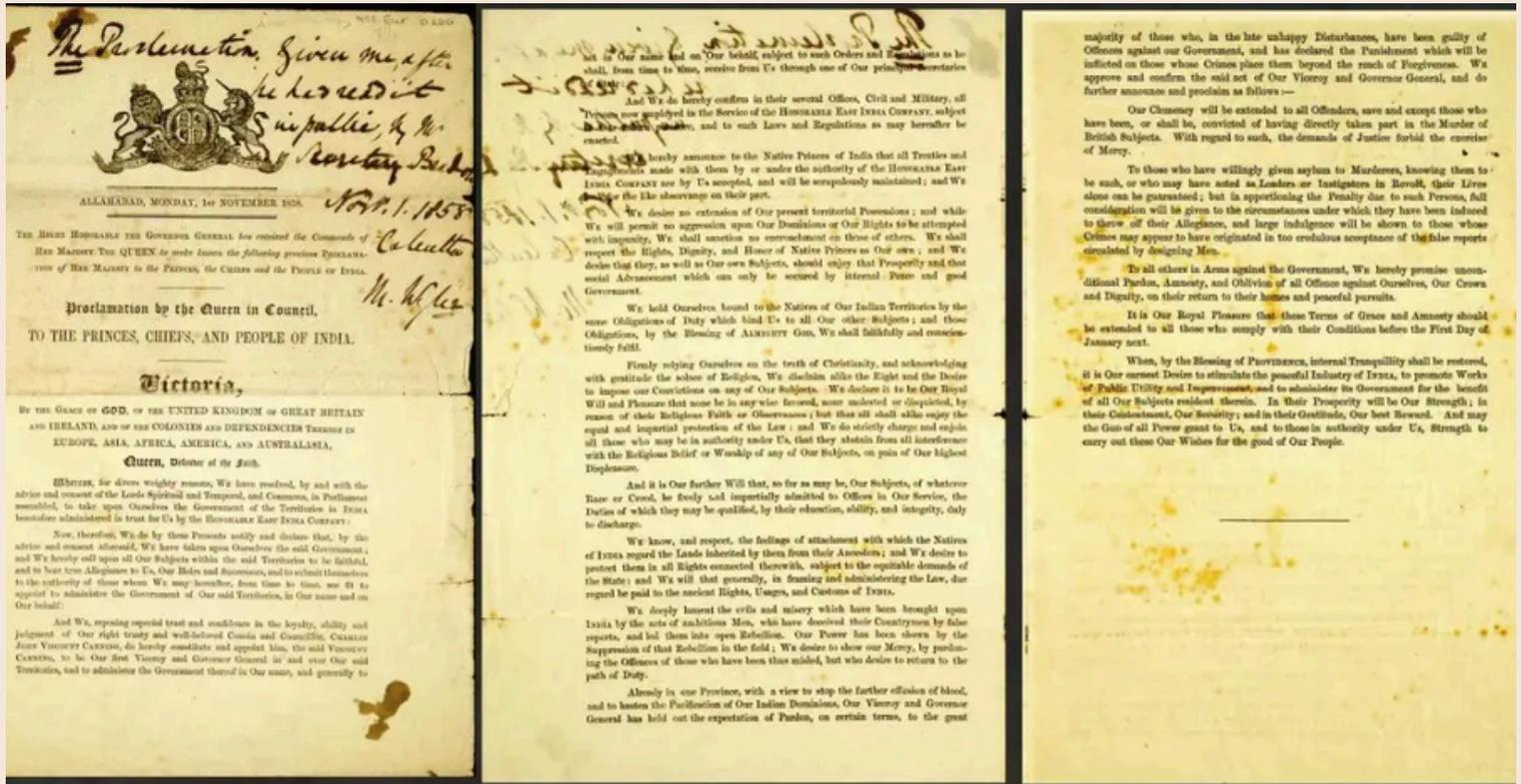


primary sources:



A map of British India or "Hindoostan," divided into the different colonial regions and territories, c. 1855.

Image originally printed in J.H. Colton's *Atlas of the World Illustrating Physical and Political Geography*, Vol 2. Made available in the public domain by Wikimedia Commons.



The proclamation to the "Princes, Chiefs, and People of India," issued by Queen Victoria on 1 November 1858.

Document originally created by the Government of the Great Britain. Made available in the public domain by Wikimedia Commons.



Enslaved laborers work the sugar cane harvest on a plantation in Trinidad, c. 1836.

Originally created by Richard Bridgens and published in *West India Scenery*. Made available in the public domain by SLAVERY IMAGES: A Visual Record of the African Slave Trade and Slave Life in the Early African Diaspora



Indian "coolie" workers, including men, women, and children, pose after their arrival in Trinidad, c. 1897.

Photographer unknown; made available in the public domain by Wikimedia Commons.

WOMAN'S
EMIGRATION PASS.

HEALTH CLASS.

DEPÔT No. 1287

For ship "Manshaw" PROCEEDING TO TRINIDAD.

No. 6

Trinidad Emigration Agency,
CALCUTTA, the 19. 9. 1890

PARTICULARS OF REGISTRATION { Place..... Patna
Date..... 21. 7. 90
Register No.... 443

Name,..... Hussain Jagrani

Father's name,..... Ramdayal

Age,..... 25

Caste,..... Kusmi

Name of next-of-kin,..... Ramlochan Nephew

If married, name of husband.....

District,..... Gorakhpur

Thana,..... Do

Village or Town & Mahalla..... Bandiba

Bodily Marks,..... Tattoo marked both fore arms

Height,..... 5 Feet 1 Inches.

CERTIFIED that we have examined and passed the abovenamed woman as fit to emigrate ; that she is free from all bodily and mental disease ; and that she has been vaccinated since engaging to emigrate.

DATED,

The 15-9-90

H. S. S. S.
Surgeon Superintendent.

[Signature]
Depôt Surgeon.

A form documenting personal, caste, and health information for a woman emigrating to Trinidad as an indentured laborer, c. 1890.

Document made accessible in the public domain by the National Archives of Trinidad and Tobago.

TRINIDAD.

CONDITIONS OF SERVICE AND TERMS OF AGREEMENT WHICH THE RECRUITER IS AUTHORIZED TO OFFER ON BEHALF OF THE AGENT TO INTENDING EMIGRANTS.

1. *Indenture.*—5 years from the date of arrival in the Colony in the case of Male and Female Emigrants alike.
2. *Period of Labour.*—For a Male Emigrant the whole five years of his Indenture: but for a Female Emigrant three years only from the date of her allotment to an employer.
3. *Nature of Labour.*—Work in connection with the cultivation of the soil or the manufacture of the produce on any plantation.
4. *Number of days on which the Emigrant is required to labour in each week.*—Every day, excepting Sundays and authorized holidays.
5. *Number of hours in each day during which the Emigrant is required to labour without extra remuneration.*—Nine, inclusive of half an hour for rest and refreshment.
6. *Monthly or daily wages or task work rates.*—Able-bodied adults of and above sixteen years of age shall be paid one shilling and a half penny which is at present equivalent to twelve annas and six pie for each day's work. Adults not able-bodied or minors of and above ten years and under sixteen years of age shall be paid eight pence which is at present equivalent to eight annas for each day's work, and when performing extra work shall be paid in proportion for every extra hour of work. Wages earned will be paid fortnightly. If the Emigrant be required to work by task instead of by time the same wages shall be paid as to unindentured labourers on the same or other neighbouring plantations, or to indentured labourers on the neighbouring plantations, and such wages may be more, but shall not be less than the minimum wages payable for time work.
7. *Conditions as to return passage.*—The Emigrant on completing a continuous residence of ten years in Trinidad, and holding or becoming entitled to a certificate of exemption from labour shall, with family, if any, should they not be under indenture, or, if under indenture, should commutation money have been paid to their employer, be provided with a return passage back to Calcutta on payment of one-half of the passage money in the case of men, and one-third in the case of women. Provided that every such Emigrant who is destitute or disabled shall, with dependents, be entitled to a free return passage. Persons who have previously proceeded to the Colony and returned to India shall not be entitled to return passages. After completing a continuous residence of five years and holding or becoming entitled to a certificate of exemption from labour, the Emigrant may return to India at his own cost. Blankets and warm clothing are supplied gratis on leaving India but not for the return voyage.
8. *Other Conditions.*—Full rations will be provided for adults and minors by the employer for twelve calendar months following the date of allotment, according to the scale sanctioned by the Government of Trinidad, at a cost of three pence which is at present equivalent to three annas each daily, and to each infant under ten years of age one-third of a ration free of cost.

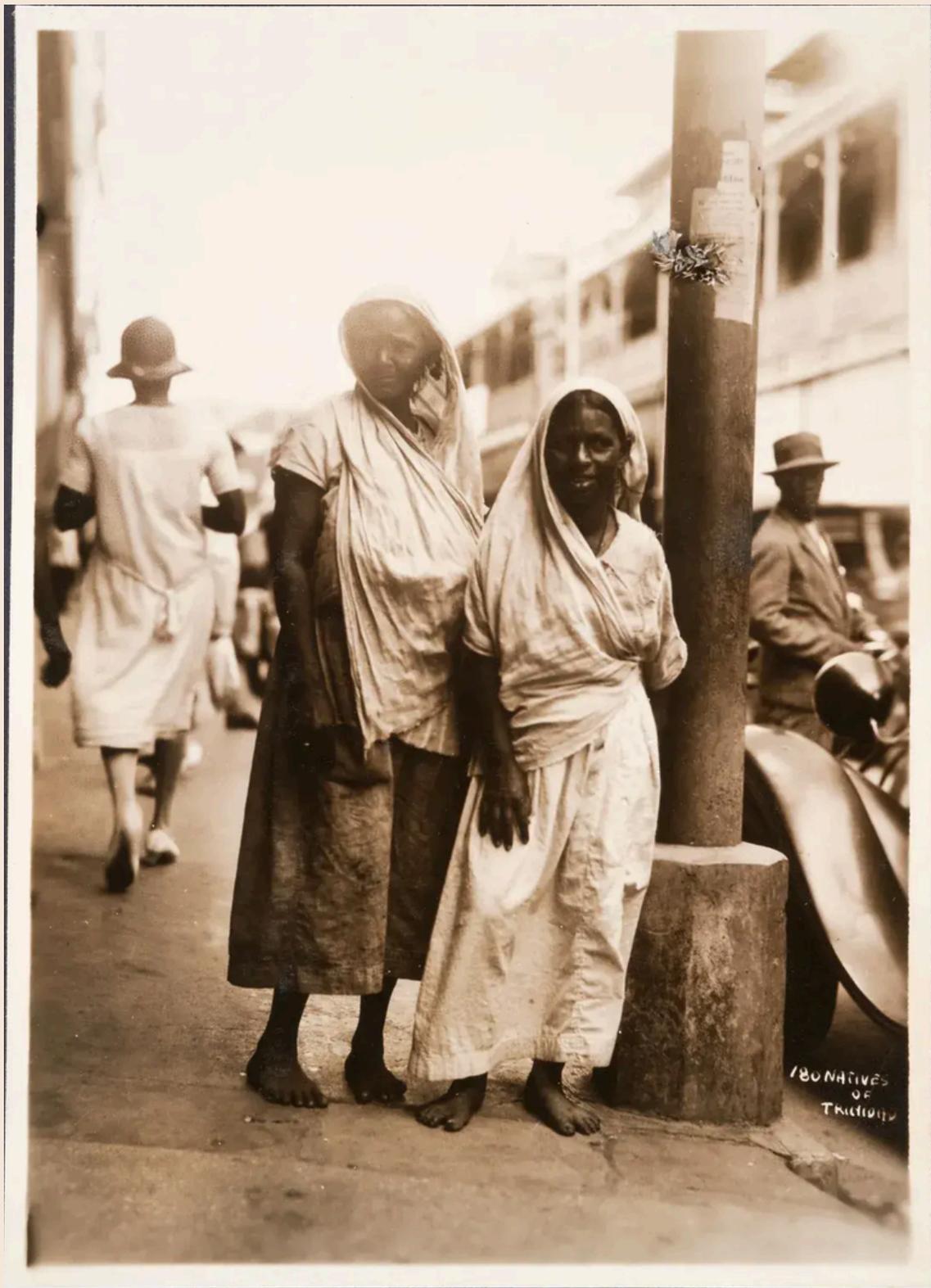
Suitable dwellings will be assigned to Emigrants free of rent, and such dwellings will be kept by the employer in good repair.

Hospital accommodation with Medical attendance, comforts, &c. will be provided free of charge to all emigrants under indenture and their families.

१. इकरार नामा—सरद और ज़माना कुली के लिये कलनी या परदेश से पहुंचने की तारीख से पांच बरस तक बर्हीपर रहने होगा।
२. मुह्त नौकरो की—सरद कुली के लिये पूरा पांच बरस तक मेहनत करने होगा मगर ज़माना कुली के लिये मुकरर होने की तारीख से सिर्फ तीन बरस तक मेहनत करने होगी।

A document in English and Hindi, listing the conditions of indenture – including term of contract, pay, nature of labor, and conditions for a return passage.

Document held in the National Archives of the United Kingdom and made available online via the London Museum. Rights status unknown, but usable under Section 107 of the Copyright Act (Fair Use).



A photograph showing two Indian women in Trinidad, West Indies.

Document made available online via the London Museum. Rights status unknown, but reasonably Fair Use under Section 107 of the Copyright Act.



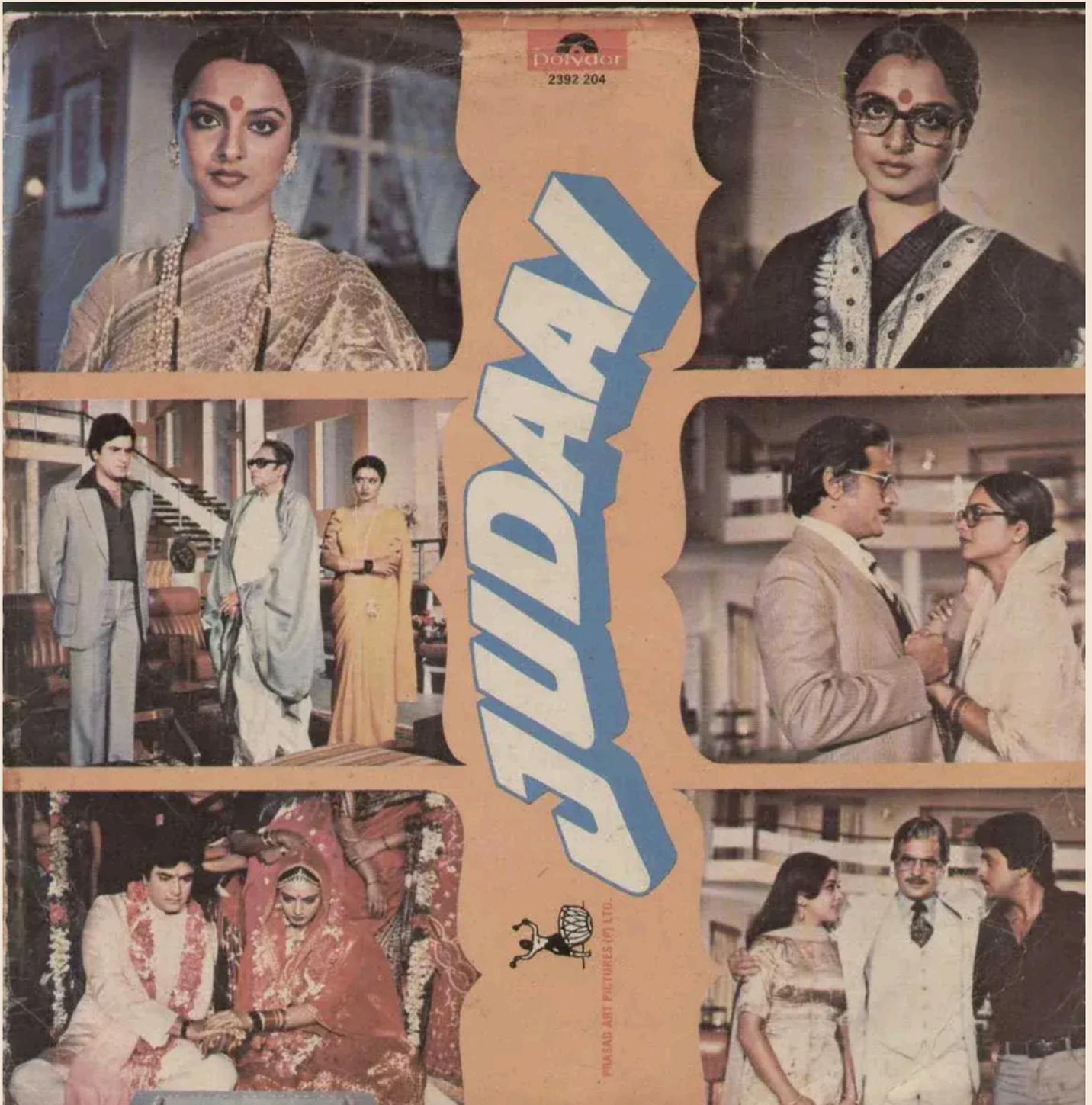
A selection of vintage Drupatee Ramgoonai cassette tapes, date unknown.

Made available online courtesy of the Trinidad & Tobago Music Library. Rights status known, but reasonably Fair Use under Section 107 of the Copyright Act.



The album art for Drupatee Ramgonai's 1988 album, "O Tassawaaley."

Album produced by Rohit International Records and made available online at [discogs.com](https://www.discogs.com). Rights status unknown, but reasonably Fair Use under Section 107 of the Copyright Act.



Album art for the movie soundtrack to "Judaai" (1980).

Music by Laxmikanth Pyarelal, album produced by Polydor Records. Made available online at Bollywood Vinyl. Rights status unknown, but reasonably Fair Use under Section 107 of the Copyright Act.



The author's grandfather in a New York City grocery store in the 1980s.

Photographer unknown; permissions granted via Guinevere's family.



Group photo of the East Indian Music Academy, date unknown.

Photograph by the East Indian Music Academy and made available on their website.

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THANK YOU FOR READING!

