

INSTITUT FRANÇAIS DE PONDICHÉRY / FRENCH INSTITUTE OF PONDICHERRY

The Institut français de Pondichéry (IFP) or French Institute of Pondicherry, is a research centre under the joint authority of the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Development (MAEDI) and the French National Centre for Scientific Research (CNRS). It was established in 1955 under the terms agreed to in the Treaty of Cession between the Indian and French governments. It has three main missions -- research, expertise and training -- and undertakes scientific programmes and projects in the fields of Indology, Ecology and Social Sciences. Its research interests cover South and Southeast Asia.

THE INSTITUTE'S DOCUMENTARY HERITAGE

Over the years, the French Institute of Pondicherry has gathered together precious documents in its premises and has become an enormous reservoir of knowledge on India's culture, society and environment. The documentary heritage of the Institute includes:

- the manuscript collection (8187 palm-leaf bundles, 360 paper codices and 1144 recent paper transcripts). It is the largest collection in the world of manuscripts of texts of the Saiva Siddhanta and has been deemed a "Memory of the World" Collection by UNESCO;
- the photo archives (more than 136,000 photographs) that are a unique resource for visual information about South India in the second half of the twentieth century, particularly its temple art;
- the library collection (details below).

Ecology

Over 10500 books and articles, 440 reports and 40 current journals devoted to ecology, forestry,

THE LIBRARY COLLECTION

The library of the French Institute of Pondicherry is a multidisciplinary research library. Its collection consists of 67000 books, 380 theses, 1600 articles and 800 journals of which 140 are currently received, relating to the fields of Indology, Ecology and Social Sciences.

Indology

Over 39000 books, 70 current journals -- a collection that is among the richest in South India in the domains of Indian literature and grammar (primarily Sanskrit and Tamil), sastra-s (i.e. traditional disciplines, including philosophy), religion, art, archaeology and epigraphy, astrology and traditional medicine etc.

Some of the noteworthy sections in the collection are: The art and architecture section that includes books on temple art, architecture and iconography, particularly of South India ; the Sanskrit literature and Tantra sections that contain several rare editions ; the Tamil section that includes books on classical and modern Tamil literature, grammar, religious literature, history, sociology etc.

The Indological collection of the IFP is deemed to be one of the largest French collections in the field of Indology.

READERS AND SERVICES

Though the library's primary role is to serve the Institute's staff, it also welcomes outside readers who are involved in serious research and study, particularly post-graduate students, researchers and academics. Admission is free of cost. The library receives over 4000 visits from readers every year.

1. Borrowing privileges are reserved for the Institute's staff. Other readers have to consult the documents in the reading room.
2. Access to electronic resources and inter-library loan facilities are also reserved for the Institute's staff.
3. Photocopying facilities are provided to all on chargeable basis. Old and/or damaged books are not photocopied. Such books can be digitized at a charge if they are in the public domain.
4. The reading room has dedicated computers to access the library catalogue. It also has wi-fi coverage for those who bring their own laptops.

TIMINGS

The library is open Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. and 2 p.m. to 5.30 p.m. It is closed on weekends and on holidays as fixed by the French Institute of Pondicherry.

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