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Locating Overseas France (*outre-mer*)^[1] through Open Access:The Periodicals of *Établissements français dans l'Inde*

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Introduction

France's long colonial past, and the possession of overseas territories, has meant that there is a wealth of print materials that were produced by the French colonial administrators, colonists and those whom they ruled. One of the print artifacts of Colonial rule is the collection of newspapers and periodicals that were published by the French in the colonies. These materials serve as a testimony to the complex processes of colonization, dominance sometimes hegemonic or sometimes without hegemony, acculturation and partial assimilation of the French ideas by some of those whom they ruled ^[2] The construct of France as the civilizing entity has been examined in the several works by various scholars.^{[3][4]} Post-colonial theorists have pored over various archival documents of the territories that France once held and were defined as overseas territories of France. These territories were not contiguous with geographic France and their possession thus "dislocated France" out of its European boundaries and implanted it on various continents like Africa, the Americas and Asia.

In the case of the French colonial experience in South Asia, French India remained the last colonial outpost in India, from 1668 until 1954, where France transferred these territories to India's de facto control. And in 1962, French India finally ceased to exist with the ratification of a treaty. While the French colonial experience in India was interrupted on several occasions due to the British interregnum in French territories, the historical continuity is well described in works by several authors including Malleson,^[5] Kennedy,^[6] and others.^[7] Newspapers and journals were produced to be consumed immediately by those who lived in the colonies with a finite time-span for their circulation in mind. However, these French periodicals serve as a print documentary record of the time.

These historical newspapers and periodicals are often used as primary source materials by undergraduates, graduate students and scholars in their academic research. While these newspapers and periodicals serve as a rich trove of information about the society as it existed in a particular time period, access to these historical periodicals is problematic. In North American settings, issues pertaining to library access to these periodicals if these are from the non-English speaking world is further complicated as often these are perceived as high-value, low-use-specific print materials. Not all academic libraries have rich collections of Francophone Studies, or if they have had historically rich collections, in the current era of the structural economic changes within the library milieu that is compounded by the rising costs of continuations, not all libraries can afford to collect, organize and disseminate these as individual titles or as a group. In some cases, these periodicals can be considered to be a part of special collections, thus further access to them becomes restrictive. The imagery of France as it was portrayed in these periodicals, the one that civilized the Orient, the one that shared French values with the natives through the process of Francization and the one that considered its overseas territories as a part of the Metropole, thus acquires a special interest in light of limited access to these materials. However, current advances in digital technologies along with the National Library of France's commitment to Open Access and its goal of emphasizing access to these colonial-era publications become important factors that help us locate France overseas through these periodicals.

In this article, I have tried to answer the following questions:

1. What were some of the periodicals that were published in French India?
2. How many of these titles are available in North American libraries in digital format?
3. What are the periodicals of French India that are digitally available to its users along the open-access model?

Scope and Limitations

This article is a preliminary survey of the periodicals of French India that are currently available along the principles of Open Access in various repositories in France and the United States. The searches that were done in the catalog of the National Library of France as well as in the Hathi Trust Digital Library have their inherent limitations as searching for these bibliographic records in itself is nuanced due to several factors. First, the way the languages of publication are currently coded did not allow me to search for the bilingual periodicals. Secondly, not all publications of French India can be found digitally. This article does not gauge the impact of French colonization of South Asia through the lens of historians. Due to the limitation of the scope, I was not able to carry out a detailed subject analysis of each of these periodicals. I was not able to also see the percentage of periodicals that were published privately in French India vs. those that were published by the Colonial government.

Literature Review

Sources on the periodicals of French India remain limited as not much has been written about them. In the large scheme of French Colonial administrative politics, their Indian possessions had relatively minor importance. One of the key sources that deals with the printed materials of French India remains Henry Scholberg and Emmanuel Divien's *Bibliographie des Français dans l'Inde* that was published in 1973.^[8] The other source that allows us to triangulate the findings of Scholberg and Divien is *Inventaire des anciennes archives de l'Inde française*.^[9]

On the other hand, the Open Access policy of the European Union of which France is a constituent doesn't spell out specific OA mandates for the Colonial era periodicals. A recent EU publication entitled, "Guidelines to the Rules on Open Access to Scientific Publications and Open Access to Research Data in Horizon 2020," defines OA as follows:

Open access (OA) can be defined as the practice of providing on-line access to scientific information that is free of charge to the user and that is re-usable. In the context of R&D, open access to 'scientific information' refers to two main categories: Peer-reviewed scientific publications (primarily research articles published in academic journals) Scientific research data: data underlying publications and/or other data (such as curated but unpublished datasets or raw data.)^[10]

Since the EU OA policy, does not specifically mandate making available historical European periodicals to wide audiences, as these were produced in the colonial milieu, it is left to an individual member state and their national libraries and archives to make these available.

Findings

There are two excellent readily available sources of information on French Colonial Archives. One is the *Archives nationales d'outre mer* (<http://www.archivesnationales.culture.gouv.fr/anom/en/>) and its online database called "Instruments de recherche (IREL-ANOM)" (<http://www.archivesnationales.culture.gouv.fr/anom/en/Recherches/IREL.html>)". Its landing page is shown below.



The landing page of IREL-ANOM.

However, for our research purposes, this archive falls short when it comes to indexing periodicals and newspapers of the colonial era. If one conducts searches using multiple keywords like "L'Inde française", "Établissements français dans l'Inde" or "Pondichéry," we only get limited results on the archival fonds as shown below.



Results of searches on French India in IREL-ANOM database

Since none of the searches in the IREL-ANOM indicated any specific periodical title from French India, one thus relies on the National Library of France (Bibliothèque nationale de France) and its catalog's advanced search to locate these

periodicals. I used the following limits for my first search.

Language= French, Country/ies of publication=France, India, Format of Print Item=Periodical, Date of publishing=1700-1954 and keyword= "Inde." I used similar words for the following keywords: "L'Inde française", "Établissements français dans l'Inde" or "Pondichéry".

Lastly, the territory of French India was not contiguous. As the map below shows, French possessions were Pondicherry, Karikal, Yanaon, Chandernagore, and Mahe. Thus, besides French, I also added languages like Bengali, Tamil, and Malayalam to see if there are any other additional results.



By Produits du Lion Noir. France 1920s. [Public domain], via Wikimedia Commons.^[12]

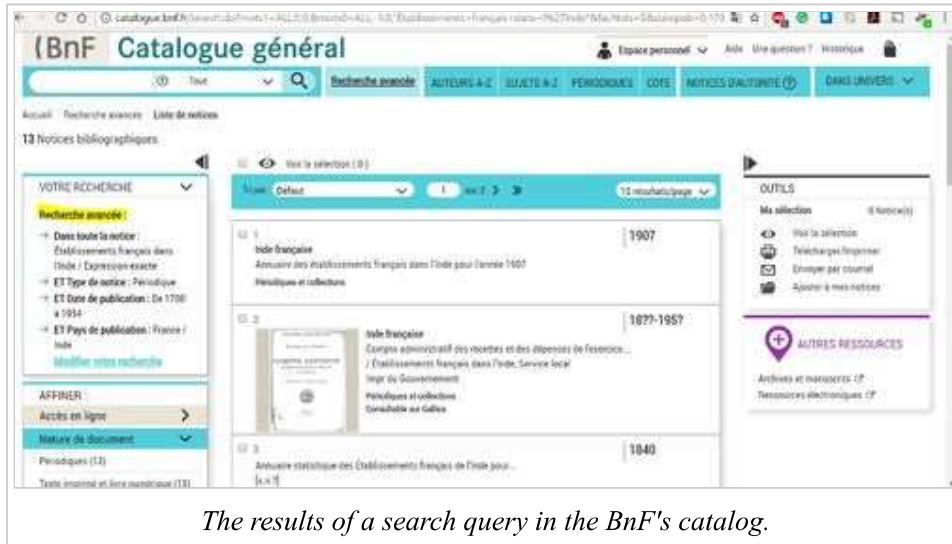
The different results that I obtained are in the table below:

Keyword+Language/s	Results
"Inde" + "French"	470
"Inde" + "French, Bengali, Malayalam, Tamil"	111
"Inde" + "Bengali, Malayalam, Tamil"	34
"Établissements français dans l'Inde"	11
"L'Inde française" + "French, Bengali, Malayalam, Tamil"	17
"Pondichéry" + "French, Bengali, Malayalam, Tamil"	70

Table 1: The distribution of results by keyword and language for the years 1700-1954 for the publications of French India.^[14]

Below is a screenshot of the results of my first search, which are described in Table 1 above. The table shows that the BnF is a natural source for periodicals of French India. However, how many of these 470 are digitally available to the user

along the OA model?



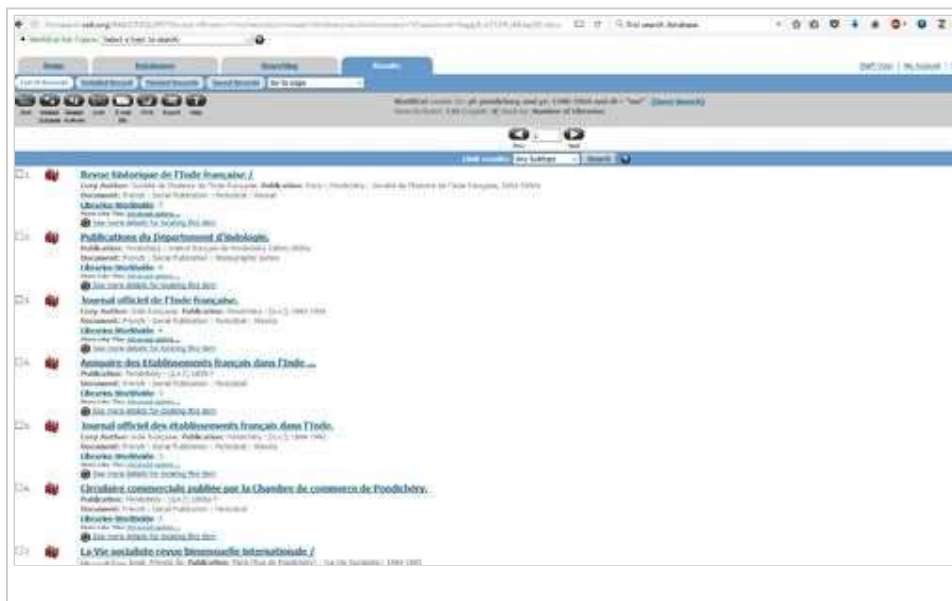
The results of a search query in the BnF's catalog.

How many of these periodicals are contained within United States libraries remains another difficult task. To this end, I used the Worldcat FirstSearch database, and I performed the following searches. To this end, I used, place of publications, i.e., Pondichéry (Pondichery/ Pondicherry), Chandernagore, Karikal, and Mahe (Mahé). In the table below, one sees the distribution by the places of publication. For Mahe, there were no results, most of the time; one has to disambiguate the place from the capital of Seychelles.

Year of Publication	Place of Publication	No. of Results
1700-1954	Pondichery/Pondichery	132
	Chandernagore	2 (+2 outside of FI)
	Karikal	17 (+4 outside of FI)
	Mahe (Mahé)	0

Table 2: FirstSearch Results by places of publication in French India.

Below are the results as they appear in FirstSearch.



The results from a Worldcat-FirstSearch search for Pondichéry.

I consulted two online resources in order to see if any of these periodicals were available in their digital fora. The first was Gallica.fr (<http://gallica.fr>), which is the digital component of the BnF, and the second source was Hathi Trust. For Gallica, I used the same previously used keywords to search as follows, "L'Inde française", "Établissements français dans l'Inde" or "Pondichéry". Also, Gallica's holdings can be searched effectively in the General Catalog of the BnF.

The search string and the limits were kept the same as these were in the previous searches within the BnF. For example, if one searches in Gallica for Pondichery/ Pondichéry as a keyword, with India as the place for publication, for the years from 1700 to 1954, and the format equals periodicals, we see that there are 20 digital surrogates of these periodicals as shown below.



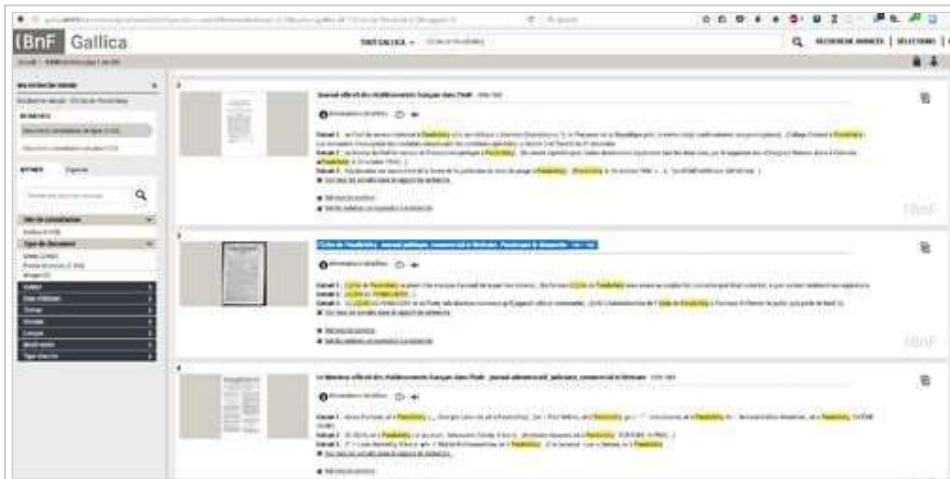
Digitized French India periodicals in Gallica.

If one highlights one of the periodicals, one gets further bibliographic details.

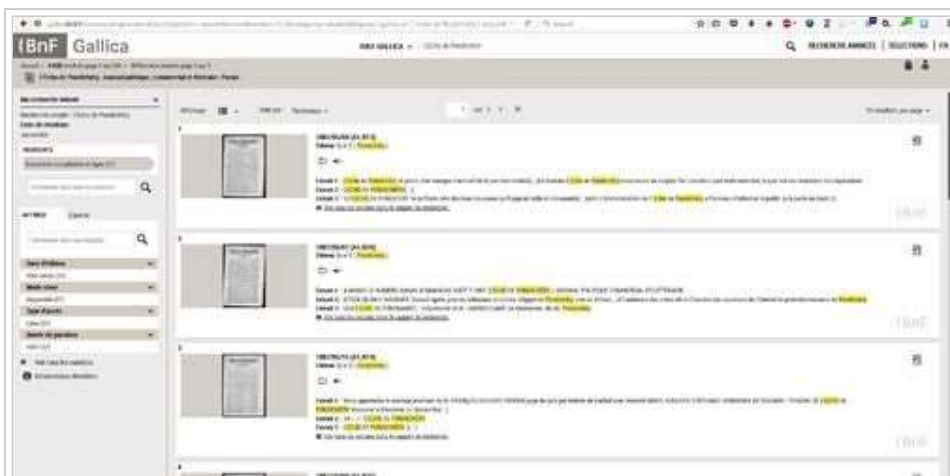


L'Echo de Pondichéry. Journal politique, commercial et littéraire. Paraissant le dimanche - 1887-1887

However, the BnF's general catalog did not allow me to directly link to the digital images of the issues of the periodical. To this end, I had to search again in Gallica's separate catalog. And I was able to access the digital surrogates of "*L'Echo de Pondichéry*."



L'Echo de Pondichéry



L'Echo de Pondichéry

The results of searches of my findings are shown below.

Keyword	Number of Items
<i>Pondichéry</i>	20
<i>L'Inde française</i>	14
<i>Etablissements français dans l'Inde</i>	6
Total	40

Table 3: The results of a keyword search in BnF's general catalog by keyword terms that are part of Gallica's holdings.

While French India's early periodicals were part of a governmental program to document legislative acts, local regulations, and news from the Metropole, they acquire a special importance for the researchers of Early French colonization of India. Thus, I wanted to see how many of these governmental periodicals of French India are available online. I was able to locate the following governmental as shown in the table 4 below.

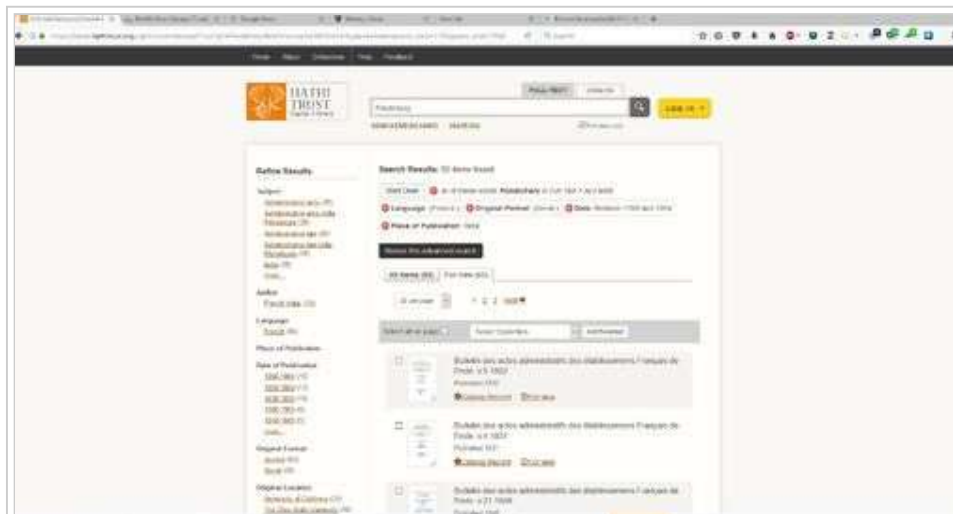
Title	Period	Years of Issues available on-line	No. of Issues online	Frequency
<i>Compte administratif des recettes et des dépenses du Service local pour l'exercice. Compte emprunt et caisse de réserve (Établissements français dans l'Inde)</i>	1931-1942	1931-1937	7	Annual
<i>Budget des recettes et des dépenses pour l'exercice... (Établissements français dans l'Inde. Service local)</i>	1858-1954	1858-1859, 1877-1879, 1896-1938	50	Annual
<i>Compte administratif des recettes et des dépenses de l'exercice... (Établissements français dans l'Inde)</i>	1877-1957	1887-1894, 1904-1923, 1925-1930	38	n/a
<i>Etat de développement des recettes et des dépenses de l'exercice (Établissements français dans l'Inde. Service local)</i>	1877-1877	1857, 1859, 1869-1871, 1873-1877	11	n/a
<i>Bulletin de l'instruction primaire des Établissements français dans l'Inde</i>	1877	1904	1 and 2 in one.	
<i>Le Moniteur officiel des établissements français dans l'Inde: journal administratif, judiciaire, commercial et littéraire</i>	1850-1893	1881-1893	1294	Bi-weekly
<i>Journal officiel des établissements français dans l'Inde</i>	1894-1942	1894-1937	4017	Weekly, and then bi-weekly
<i>Discours prononcé à l'ouverture du Conseil général par le gouverneur... / Établissements français de l'Inde</i>	1879-1940	1879, 1884, 1885 (2 issues), 1888	5	irregular

Table 4: Government periodicals of French India in Gallica.

Hathi Trust Digital Library and French India periodicals

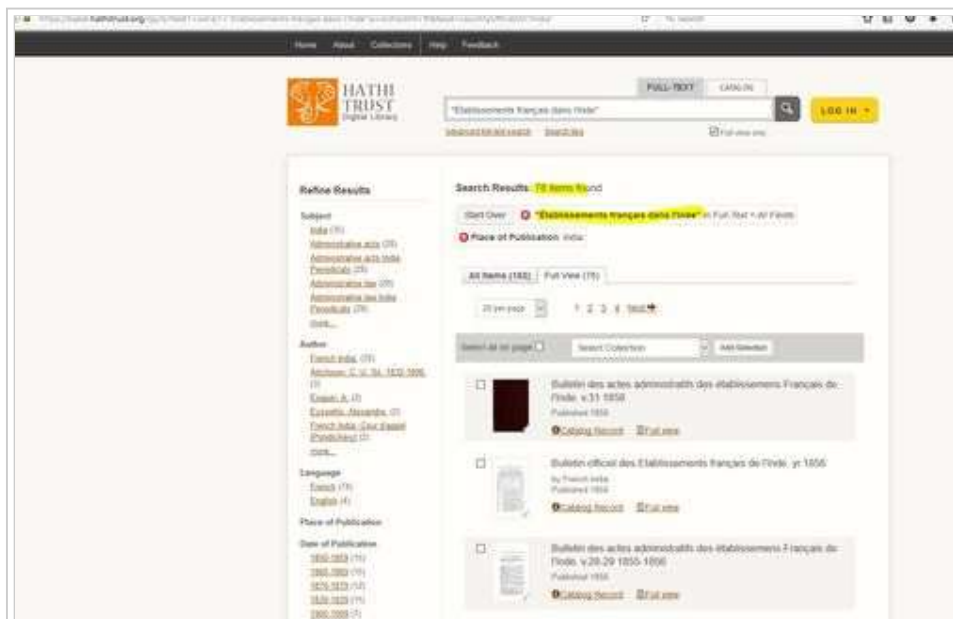
Hathi Trust is an important North American repository and its self-description is as follows, "HathiTrust is a partnership of major research institutions and libraries working to ensure that the cultural record is preserved and accessible long into the future. The mission of HathiTrust is to contribute to research, scholarship, and the common good by collaboratively collecting, organizing, preserving, communicating, and sharing the record of human knowledge. There are more than 120 partners (<https://www.hathitrust.org/community>) in HathiTrust, and membership is open to institutions worldwide."^[15]

One can access the digital surrogates of the French India periodicals in Hathi Trust under the Open Access model. However, one of the limitations of Hathi Trust is that it doesn't allow for searching by place of publication. I repeated the same three keyword searches, with the same time limits for the publication, languages and formats of the item. The 60 results that I received are indicated below. For 32 out of these 60 hits, we see that the author is French India.



Periodicals of French India in Hathi Trust. Keyword used was Pondichéry.

For the keyword term, "L'Inde française," I got the same 60 hits and for "Établissements français dans l'Inde," I got 78 results.



Results for the keyword search, "Établissements français dans l'Inde," in Hathi Trust.

Discussion and Final Analysis

In this very basic survey of issues that surround access to periodicals of French India, I have provided some insights on why these periodicals, as a testimony to Overseas France, are important. While, in general, due to the introductory nature of my article, I have tried to avoid issues like, how did the colonial press function? Did or it did not create this "imagined

community" of the *Francized*/Frenchified natives who in turn aspired to become like the ones who initially ruled them?^[16] The picture of French colonial presence in South Asia remains extremely nuanced due to the relatively small sizes of these French territories when compared to their British counterparts, and due to the general apathy toward their South Asian possessions in the aftermath of the Napoleonic Wars.

In general, I have addressed the issues surrounding access to openly available digital surrogates of these periodicals. As one can see from these arguments, there is a substantial portion of French India periodicals that are available digitally under Open Access principles. These can be utilized by researchers, students and faculty members who are currently working on Colonial France and French India.

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Notes

1. ↑ The term outre-mer was adapted to indicate the overseas territories of France. There is a ministry for Overseas France (<http://www.outre-mer.gouv.fr/>)
2. ↑ Guha, Ranajit. *Dominance without Hegemony: History and Power in Colonial India*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2011. Print.
3. ↑ Conklin, Alice L. 2003. *A mission to civilize: the republican idea of empire in France and West Africa, 1895-1930*. Stanford, California: Stanford University Press.
4. ↑ Said, Edward W. 1993. *Culture and imperialism*. London: Chatto and Windus.
5. ↑ Malleon, G B. *History of the French in India: From the Founding of Pondichery in 1674 to the Capture of That... Place in 1761* (classic Reprint). S.l.: Forgotten Books, 2015. Print.
6. ↑ Kennedy, B. E. "Anglo-French Rivalry in Southeast Asia 1763-93: Some Repercussions." *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 4, no. 2 (1973): 199-215. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20070048>.
7. ↑ Gobalakichenane, M. "The 'French Revolution' of the Tamils in Pondichery (1790-1793)." *East and West* 50, no. 1/4 (2000): 295-308. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/29757458>.
8. ↑ Scholberg, Henry, and Emmanuel Divien. 1973. *Bibliographie des Français dans l'Inde*. [Pondichery]: [Historical Society of Pondichery; distributors: India Book Exports, Madras].
9. ↑ Scholberg, Henry, and Emmanuel Divien. 1973. *Bibliographie des Français dans l'Inde*. [Pondichery]: [Historical Society of Pondichery; distributors: India Book Exports, Madras].
10. ↑ "Guidelines to the Rules on Open Access to Scientific Publications and Open Access to Research Data in Horizon 2020 (<https://ec.europa.eu/research/openscience/index.cfm?pg=openaccess>) . *EU-Research and Innovation*. March 21, 2017. Accessed June 19, 2017.
11. ↑ Wikimedia-Map of French India Poster, accessed June 19, 2017, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File%3ACollectible_card_Comptoirs_des_Indes.jpg.
12. ↑ Wikimedia-Map of French India Poster, accessed June 19, 2017, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File%3ACollectible_card_Comptoirs_des_Indes.jpg.
13. ↑ I did not include Hindi language in my search, but Aditi (8-O2K-2231) is one of the Hindi annual that was published in Pondichery from 1947-1949. The Arcana was another Hindi language periodical that was published by Aurobindo Ashrama in Pondichery (4-JO-10244 in BnF's catalog).
14. ↑ I did not include Hindi language in my search, but Aditi (8-O2K-2231) is one of the Hindi annual that was published in Pondichery from 1947-1949. The Arcana was another Hindi language periodical that was published by Aurobindo Ashrama in Pondichery (4-JO-10244 in BnF's catalog).
15. ↑ "Welcome to HathiTrust!" Welcome to HathiTrust! | www.hathitrust.org | HathiTrust Digital Library. Accessed June 23, 2017. <https://www.hathitrust.org/about>.
16. ↑ Anderson, Benedict. 2016. *Imagined Communities Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. Paw Prints.

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