The Gundert legacy in the University Library of Tübingen

The development of the Malayalam script

Priv.-Doz. Dr. Heike Oberlin
1. Malayalam – a short introduction

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Sample text

Traditional orthography

Reformed orthography

Transliteration

Manusyare livrunam tulyavakakka[h]obhum antrasasum swataryayathurmukhottayicavi samabavale. Anythonyam bhratubudzelle petumupuvandna manusyamnu vivekabudhnyam manuhasayum smokhamulykkannat.

Candrakkala

either virâma or ‘half-u’:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{m} & \rightarrow \text{m} \\
\text{m} + \text{a} & \rightarrow \text{m} + \text{a} \\
\text{m} + \text{u} & \rightarrow \text{m} + \text{u} \\
\text{m} + \text{a} + \text{u} & \rightarrow \text{m} + \text{a} + \text{u}
\end{align*}
\]
Zacharia, Scaria (= Skariya Sakkaṭya, general editor), Tuebingen University Library Malayalam manuscripts series (TULMMS):

- Taccōḷippāṭṭukal, text with critical studies, Kottayam, 1994
- Paḷaśśirēkhakal (Tellicherry records vol 4 & 12), text with critical studies, Kottayam, 1994
- Payyannurpāṭṭ, Kottayam, 1994
- Talasśēri rekhaṭal, Kottayam, 1996
- Afićaṭi jilānappāṇa çiftāṭṭ, Kottayam, 1996
German university gifts Malayalam the legacy of Herman Gundert

S. Anandan

At a time when public institutions in Kerala stay shy of granting the public free access to digital archives of Malayalam's cultural heritage shaped by diverse influences, the German University of Tubingen is showing the way by embarking on a massive project to digitise and make available online for free the legacy of Herman Gundert to the language.

Malayalam was recently conferred with classical language status.

The corpus of nearly 80 manuscripts, 150 printed works and some palm leaf manuscripts of the German missionary-cum-scholar available with the university runs into some 42,000 pages, whose proposed digitisation comes in the wake of efforts made by Malayalam Wikipedia activists to make the priceless repository of knowledge accessible to the public.

Heike Moser, Koodiyattom exponent, Indologist and associate professor at the university, said funds were being sought from the German Research Foundation for the project, which would take nearly a year to complete.

Manuscripts released

Besides Ms. Moser and linguist Scaria Zacharias, a modest gathering of Wikipedians and cultural enthusiasts attended on Thursday the token release of two manuscripts from Gundert's 'Thalassery Manuscripts' — Pazhamchol Mala and Orayiram Pazhamchol — accidentally discovered by Mr. Zacharias and scholar Albrecht Frenz from Tubingen's archives way back in 1986.

Malayalam Wiki coordinator Shiju Alex, a Bangalore-based techie who has taken the lead in bringing ancient Malayalam works into the public domain, told The Hindu that while a chunk of Gundert's works was available in the digital archives of the State Central Library, university libraries and Kerala Sahitya Akademi, they remained inaccessible to the general public.

Mr. Alex, who is on mission to source, digitise and publish online ancient Malayalam texts and documents under the creative commons license, was instrumental in mooting the project as he wrote to Gabriele Zeller, research director of Tubingen University, convincing her of the need for such a project.

Among the manuscripts released by Tubingen on Thursday, Orayiram Pazhamchol was impressively keyed in book form by select groups of school students from Kannur, Kottayam and Kollam with support from IT@School, Sayahna.
Ci xiv 39: 30,000 Sprichwörter – 1,000 Sprichwörter

MALAYALAM RESEARCH JOURNAL

(session: 10, 20, 30, 40, 50, 60, 70, 80, 90, 100)
Malayalam palm-leaf manuscripts

Cover page of the first book printed in Malayalam in 1772:

*Nasrānikal okkakum ariyenjuna samīkṣepavedāththam*
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