

UNIVERSITY OF KERALA



CHRISTIAN STUDY CENTRE FOR CULTURAL AND SOCIAL CHANGE

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Three-day International Seminar on ‘The Early Christian Missionaries Contribution to the Linguistic Structuring of Indian Languages,’ Organized by the Christian Study Centre For Cultural and Social Change, University of Kerala, Kariavattom Campus, Thiruvananthapuram.

Christianity in India has a long history dating back hundreds of years. The Christian presence is generally believed to have started in the first century AD itself dating from the belief that St. Thomas, an apostle of Jesus Christ came to Kerala with the purpose of spreading the Christian faith.

Christianity thus grew in the last 500 years as different missionary groups established a presence in various parts of what is now South Asia, composed of a number of different countries, one among which is India. The early Catholics were followed by the Protestant Dutch, the Catholic French, the Protestant Germans and finally the Protestant British under whose patronage the largest Protestant denominations were established in the region. The missionaries were at the forefront of all kinds of progressive activities in the state from building and running schools and hospitals to establishing the necessary infrastructure for the smooth conduct of religious and community life of the people in their charge. The various local rulers and kings encouraged the work of the missionaries since missionary schools and colleges were important means for the propagation of English and Western education in India. In the history of India’s development, prior to as well as after independence in 1947, it is very important to investigate the role of Christian missionaries in the overall development of India from a cultural-artistic, social, economic and educational perspective. These missionaries who came to India for missionary work were also responsible for the development of various vernacular languages in the states as well as development in education, health and the upliftment of people belonging to the depressed sections of society. The work of various missionaries in different parts of India should be documented and the historical position of each of their activities should be highlighted in the broader discourse of India’s

development debate. It will be the role of this seminar to debate on the role of missionaries in various parts of India and the depths of their contributions to the linguistic structuring of Indian Languages. The purpose of this International Seminar being held under the aegis of the Christian Study Centre for Culture and Social Changes at the Kariavattom Campus of the University of Kerala is to explore the Christian Missionary Contribution to the linguistic structuring of the languages in India. In fact, the first printing press was brought out to the country in 1556 by Christian missionaries. Besides they were the pioneers who brought out, in 1557 the first book printed in India, *Dautrina Christa*, written by St. Francis Xavier of Goa.

Further, in many cases they had to learn the local languages designed and produced for the first time the types used for printing. The early missionaries have great contribution to the linguistic structuring of regional languages in Indian.

The Christian missionaries made great efforts in learning vernacular grammar and compiled lexicon and text books. An excellent example of this activity is the English-Malayalam Dictionary compiled and printed by Herman Gundert of Basel mission on 1872. The work still enjoys reputation as one of the most authentic reference sources of the languages in Kerala. Likewise the Christian Missionaries have contributed a lot for regional languages in India. This seminar is focuses on the mapping of the early Christian missionaries' contribution to the linguistic structuring of the languages in India.

Short 20-minute presentations are invited on the following themes. Participants are also invited to send in topics that are broadly related to the topic under consideration, but may not find mentioned in the seminar themes below. Interested participants are requested to refer to the both the introductory paragraphs as well as the themes when deciding on topics for presentation at this seminar.

Seminar Themes

1. Linguistic Structuring started by missionaries in India an over view.
2. Christian Missionary contribution to the structuring of regional languages in India.
3. Christian Missionary contribution to the development of Indian languages.
4. Christian Missionary contribution to the standardization of variety speech forms in India.
5. Christian Missionary approaches to structuring of regional languages in India.
6. Christian Missionary approaches to structuring of major languages in India.
7. Christian Missionary contribution to the different levels of Linguistic structuring.

8. Christian Missionaries contribution to the structuring of minority languages in India.
9. Christian Missionaries contribution to the structuring of Tribal languages in India.

All the selected papers will be published in a book. Papers will be reviewed before the seminar and will be sending back for the correction.

Important dates:

Submission of Title of paper and Abstract:	15 th December 2018
Acceptance on the title and abstract to the seminar:	21 th December 2018
Submission of Full length Paper:	20 th January 2019
Seminar date:	7 th to 9 th February 2019
Place of seminar:	Kariavattom Campus, University of Kerala
Venue:	Seminar Hall Department of Linguistics, Kariavttom Campus
Abstract and Papers send to:	christianstudycentreku@gmail.com

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