

The structure of the portal

The digitised holdings of the estate are presented in various categories, which more easily allow the display of partial holdings.

Materials

Here you can choose whether you would like to have the „overall portfolio“, only the „prints“ or only the „manuscripts“ listed.

Languages

Researchers who are interested in our material in a specific language can display the titles in that language under „Material by language“.


Genre

It is also possible to sort the „material by genre“. In most cases, the titles are assigned to several „genres“. These are (in alphabetical order): Christian literature; fiction; grammars and dictionaries; letters; non-fiction; notebooks and drafts; proverbs; records and reports.

Sorting of the lists

By default, the lists are sorted alphabetically according to title. If you want a different order, e.g. by publication date, then click on the header of the respective column, e.g. „Date“.

Who can use the portal?

The Hermann Gundert portal is freely accessible worldwide. The digital copies are available with a license  and are available for subsequent use by the scientific community.

<http://gundert-portal.de>



Palm leaf manuscript with various small literary works in Malayalam.
Ma I 279

Basel Mission Society

From 1838 to 1859, Hermann Gundert worked in South India for the Evangelische Missionsgesellschaft in Basel, or the 'Basel Mission' in short. At this point we would like to explicitly refer to the Database of the Basel Missions archives, which contains a large treasure of picture and archive material.

www.bmarchives.org

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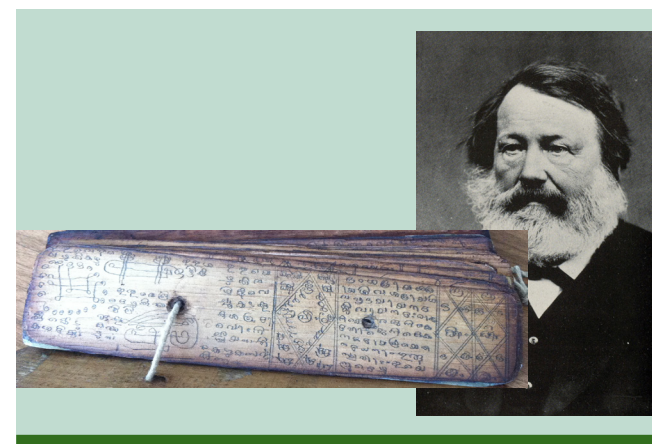
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Hermann Gundert Portal

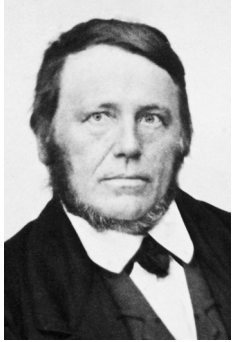
South Indian prints and
manuscripts - digital -



UNIVERSITÄTSBIBLIOTHEK



Hermann Gundert



Hermann Gundert (1814-1893), grandfather of Hermann Hesse, studied theology in Tübingen, where he also learned Sanskrit and was awarded a doctorate in 1835.

In England he then learned other Indian languages: Telugu, Marathi and Urdu. In 1838 he went to Nettur on behalf of the Basel Mission, where Malayalam is spoken.

He quickly adopted this language too.

In the following 20 years he lived in Kerala and devoted himself intensively to researching the Malayalam language and script. It was he who wrote the first major grammar of Malayalam and a groundbreaking Malayalam-English dictionary that is still in use today.

For health reasons he had to leave India for good in 1859 and moved to Calw in the Black Forest, where he headed the 'Calwer Verlagsverein' while further developing his literary activities and completing the works begun in India.

The Hermann Gundert Portal

Since 2016, printed and handwritten source material from the estate of Hermann Gundert and his close colleagues has been scanned, catalogued, partially transcribed in cooperation with Indian partners and made accessible with the support of the German Research Foundation (DFG).

The estate contains printed and lithographed books and small writings in Malayalam, Kannada, Tulu, Tamil, Telugu, Sanskrit and other languages, Indian manuscripts including some palm leaf manuscripts, copies of texts and notebooks in various languages by Hermann Gundert and his missionary colleagues.

The digitisation also includes all 19th-century works in South Indian languages in the University Library's holdings, even if not strictly from the estate of Hermann Gundert, as well as small English and German language writings by Gundert and his closest collaborators.

The Legacy

As a missionary, Hermann Gundert felt called to translate the Bible and other religious texts from the original into Malayalam. But he also did not stop at literary texts and so his legacy contains a wide range of different texts in Malayalam and Kannada (Canarese).

The diversity of Hermann Gundert's interests is reflected in his legacy: the collection includes grammars, primers and religious texts.

However Gundert's undertakings went far beyond this framework. Hermann Gundert rather tried to understand an entire culture and to capture it in literature, and so his legacy contains famous works such as *Indulēkha* and *Kundalatā*, the first novels in Malayalam. In addition to the modern literary works of his time he also collected old texts from the Sanskrit and Manipravalam tradition; for example, there is the Sanskrit work *Vajrasūci*, with a Malayalam commentary, or *Nalacaritam* *Maṇipravāḷam*, a largely unknown version of the well-known *Nala* story.

Gundert was particularly interested in the history of Kerala, because we can find several versions of *Kēraḷōlpatti*, the text *Kēraḷapaḷama* (History of Malabar from A. D. 1498-1631) and *Kēraḷanāṭakam*, which caused a sensation in Kerala due to the unusual legends of origin of the different castes and communities.

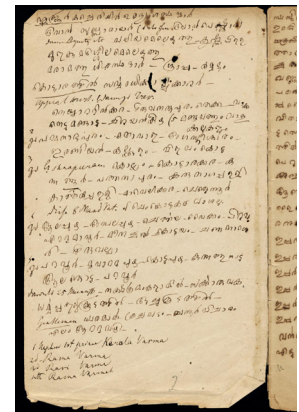
In the Kannada region, bordering on the Malayalam language area, Gundert's close confidant and collaborator Hermann Mögling worked alongside Gundert.

In addition to grammatical and lexical works, he also collected and edited literary texts. The most important works of the Kannada tradition appeared in his 'Bibliotheca Carnatica'. The series was never completed, but the first five folio volumes contain important texts on the religious and intellectual history of South India, such as *Kaṇṇataka Bhārata*, the extremely popular Kanarese adaptation of the *Mahābhārata*.

Interesting sources, not only for linguists, but also for religious and cultural historians, are the various dictionaries in the estate, which are an excellent way to understand the shift in the understanding of certain terms.



Page from a draft of the Malayala Grammar with numerous marginal notes.
Ma I 797



Translation draft and notes on *Brahmaṇḍa-Purana*.
Ma I 864-6