

UNIVERSITY OF KERALA



CHRISTIAN STUDY CENTRE FOR CULTURAL AND SOCIAL CHANGE

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Three-day National Seminar on ‘The Early Christian Missionaries Contribution to the Development of Journalism in India,’ 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 socio-cultural, 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 first printing press in India was brought to the country in 1556 by Christian Missionaries. Further, most of the language newspaper in India were started by the missionaries, in many cases they had to learn the local languages before they designed and produced for the first time the types used for printing. The credit for printing a book in Indian languages for the first time also goes to the missionaries. Thus the pioneer of printing in India were the Christian missionaries.

Interestingly, the first language newspaper in India was started by Serampor missionaries. They started Dig Darshan as a monthly in 1818. Various articles on politics and history were published in the journal. The first Bengali weekly Samachar Darpan was

started in 1819 and it was edited by J C Morshman. The publications gave preference to developments in India although it carried European views as well. The weekly's objective was to bridge the gap between the administrators and the natives. In 1829 Samachar Darpan was converted into a bilingual; newspaper when it started reporting in English along with Bengali. Kannada's first newspaper Kannada Samachar started by Christian missionaries in 1812. Satya doota, first newspaper in Telugu was started by Christian missionaries. Odiya got its first newspaper in 1849. First newspaper in Malayalam was Rajya Samacharam by Herman Gundert. Like wise, in most of the Indian languages,- the Christian missionaries were started newspaper. They also contributed to linguistic structuring of the regional languages in India. To a great extent, they pioneered journalism culture in India.

The purpose of this National 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 role and contribution various Christian Missionaries in the different language and parts of India, and to document the historical significance of each of their activities in the field of journalism in the broader discourse of India's development debate.

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. They have started many journals and publications and news-letters in different Indian languages. This seminar is focuses on the mapping of the early Christian Missionaries contribution to the Development of journalism 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. Culture of journalism started by missionaries in India an over view.
2. Christian Missionary contribution to the weeklies in regional languages in India.
3. Christian Missionary contribution to the development of journalism in various Indian languages.
4. Christian Missionary contribution to the newspaper development in India.
5. Christian Missionary approaches to develop a print culture in regional languages in India.
6. Christian Missionary approaches to start and develop journalism in major languages in India.
7. Christian Missionary contribution to the state wise approach and development of journalism.
8. Christian Missionaries contribution and struggle to start and develop journalism/ newspaper/ print media in Indian languages.

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:

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| Submission of Title of paper and Abstract: | 10 th December 2018 |
| Acceptance on the title and abstract to the seminar: | 15 th December 2018 |
| Submission of Full length Paper: | 30 th December 2018 |
| Seminar date: | 9 th to 11 th January 2019 |
| Place of seminar: | Kariavattom Campus, University of Kerala |
| Venue: | Department of Linguistics, Kariavttom Campus |
| Abstract and Papers send to: | christianstudycentreku@gmail.com |

NB:

- No registration fee
- Invited presenters will be paid TA according to the university of Kerala rules.
- Accommodation and lunch will be provided by the centre.

**Dr. Darwin. L,
Seminar Coordinator and Hon.
Director, Christian Study Centre For
Cultural and Social Change**