

Sanskrit grammar in 18th century Kerala — The work of Father Paulinus a Sancto Bartholomaeo

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The aim of this paper is to reconstruct the history of the studies on Sanskrit grammar in Kerala through the work of the Discalced Carmelite Paulinus a Sancto Bartholomaeo. He settled in Malabar from 1776 to 1789 and was the author of the first Sanskrit grammar ever printed in Europe — *Sidharùbam seu grammatica Samscrdamica* (Roma, 1790). This work, together with Paulinus' second grammar — *Vyàcarana seu locupletissima Samscrdamicae linguae institutio* (Roma, 1804) — and the grammar of Paulinus' predecessor in Kerala Father Johann Ernst Hanxleden, whose unique manuscript has been recently discovered in the San Silvestro monastery at Montecompatri (Italy), helps to cast light upon the sources utilized to teach Sanskrit grammar in Malabar during the 17th and 18th centuries.

This study will focus in particular on Paulinus' *Vyàcarana* in order to find out the grammars used by Keralan pandits to explain the nominal and verbal forms of *Siddharùpa*. This verse text, used in Kerala up to the present time, is a list of conjugations and declensions, which inspired Paulinus' *Sidharùbam* as well as Hanxleden's handwritten grammar. Were these explanatory grammars part of the Pāṇinian tradition? Were they written in Sanskrit or in Maṇipravāḷam ("language of ruby coral"), a literary language, which consists of a mixture of Malayalam and Sanskrit? How much did Western grammars imported by missionaries influence the structure of those Indian grammars?

This work of comparison is relevant to Sanskrit studies, as it aims to reconstruct the vyākaraṇa tradition in Kerala, to historical studies, as it focuses on the interactions between missionaries and Indian Brahmins, to linguistics, as it illuminates the local pronunciation of Sanskrit influenced by Dravidian languages.