

Dear Indologists:

Mid-November 2012, I was in Boston to meet with Professor Witzel, to say farewell to him at his departure to Japan. As we, Finn Gerety, Natalia (and my son, Navin from Dana Farber) were gathered at Michael's office, all torn apart at its transportation to Yokohama. Michael produced a thick and heavy object, from his office mess and entrusted me with it, a palm leaf MS, in Malayalam script and Sanskrit language, originally of Frits Staal's collection in Thailand, and sent to Michael by Nanoo Staal at Frits' death, for further disposal.

I brought it with me to Kerala in November, 2022 at my field trip to attend the Kadavallur Anyonyam. I was graciously received by Dr. C. Nilakandan at the famed Triśśūr (Trichur or Triśśivap-perūr) Brahmaśva Maṭhom, where under his direction a flourishing center of manuscriptology is functioning now, as part of active research in Vedic studies.

Many Indologists have visited the venerable old Maṭhom in their travels in India, now almost unrecognizable from vast renovations, modernized into a Western style research facility, with several new lecture halls, seminar facilities and office spaces. A key new facility is a manuscriptological laboratory, restoring and digitalizing old and abandoned MS (such as the one I brought there from Witzel and from Staal). The center is run by Dr. Olga Novicka on loan and grant from Hamburg University, with several in situ trained scholars.

Dr. Nilakandan has requested me to float this memo to the Indology List: if any of you in the Indology community is in possession of MS from old days, acquired over friendly encounters, in Kerala or elsewhere in South Asia, please dispatch them to the Trichur Maṭhom facility for cleaning up and digitalizing the item to wider usable conditions.

I attach, further, an enclosure from Dr. Nilakandan, serving as a prospectus of the Maṭhom as a research center in different area studies of Indology, at the Ph.D level.