

Findings

Name: **Steven S George**

Title; **Identity and Alienation: A Double Paradox in Literature of Dalit Christians in Kerala**

Department; **Department of English, Faculty of Humanities and Languages**, Jamia Millia Islamia

Supervisor: Prof. Nishat Zaidi

Viva-Voice Date : 09 July 2025

Notification : 30 July 2025

F.NO. COE/Ph.D./(Notification)/583/2025

Core Findings of the Thesis

- **Dual Marginalization:** Dalit Christians experience layered oppression from the Hindu caste system and within Christian religious structures.
- **Need for a Distinct Field:** Dalit Christian literature should be recognized as an independent category within Dalit studies due to its unique focus on theological, spiritual, and social exclusion.
- **Paradox of Conversion:** Religious conversion to Christianity fails to liberate Dalits from caste-based discrimination; instead, caste persists in new forms within Christian institutions.
- **Theological Contradiction:** Although Christianity preaches equality, Dalit Christians often remain excluded from religious leadership and face discrimination in churches.
- **Structural Oppression Beyond Individuals:**
 - Novels like *Mukkani* show that education and merit do not overcome caste.
 - Caste functions through symbolic violence (Bourdieu), subtly shaping access to dignity and opportunity.
- **Persistence of Caste Slavery:**
 - *Pulayathara* reveals how caste-based servitude continues post-abolition, especially within Christian institutions that align with feudal structures.
- **Caste Concealment and Identity Crisis:**
 - *Karikkottakkari* explores how caste is hidden to gain privilege, and how embracing one's Dalit identity becomes a political act.

- The act of “coming out” as Dalit parallels LGBTQ+ experiences of reclaiming identity and resisting erasure.
- Sacred Spaces as Political Battlegrounds:
 - Samvatsarangal shows that Dalit Christians’ efforts to build inclusive religious spaces are met with resistance, reflecting the entrenchment of caste within Christianity.
- Resistance Through Faith:
 - Dalit Christianity, as seen in Samvatsarangal, is not passive but rooted in active resistance against caste and colonial legacies.
- Invisibility in Mainstream Discourse:
 - Dalit Christian experiences are often ignored in both secular and religious narratives, necessitating focused academic engagement.
- Liberation Theology and Social Justice:
 - The novels advocate for a theology of liberation, where spiritual and social justice are intertwined for true Dalit emancipation.
- Call for Structural Reform:
 - Legal and institutional reforms are insufficient; systemic dismantling of caste hierarchies in both religious and social domains is essential.