

## **‘Being a New Christian:’ Dalit Resistance in Paul Chirakkarode’s *Pulayathara***

**S. Devika**

---

**Abstract:** In India, as Christian converts are reckoned to have moved out of the ambit of the caste system, untouchable Hindu castes – the Dalits – converted to Christianity to reap the fruits of a higher social status within the Christian fold. Paul Chirakkarode’s novel *Pulayathara* exposes the futility of the strategy of conversion to Christianity used by the Dalits to extricate themselves from the morass of casteism and to upgrade their social status, as the power structures of caste continue to operate within the church to discriminate against the neo-converts. It brings to light the disjuncture between the promised sense of equality and the lived experience of discrimination that conversion to Christianity had in store for the downtrodden people. This paper attempts an exposition of the dialectics of proselytization foregrounded in *Pulayathara* as a strategy of resistance against the enslavement, ill treatment and exploitation of the Dalits, a motif that recurs in Chirakkarode’s oeuvre.

**Key words:** Proselytization, Dalit Christians, Evangelisation, Casteism, Communism

*The meeting was about to begin. The new generation had decided to speak.*  
(Chirakkarode, *Pulayathara* 197)

During the feudal times, the lower castes, whose chief functionality in the extant social spectrum was to provide menial labour in the agricultural fields, were kept depressed in a constant state of enslavement and exploitation by the centuries-old practice of caste division within the Hindu fold. To escape the ostracism of caste, the oppressed lot sought refuge in a religion that remained outside the spectrum of caste – Christianity. The missionaries adopted the two-pronged expedient of educating and proselytizing the degraded classes in order to uplift and endow them with dignity and a respectable place in

society. Paul Chirakkarode in his novel *Pulayathara* (literally, ‘Pulaya Hutment’; published in 1962 and translated into English in 2019 by Catherine Thankamma) depicts proselytization as a strategy of resistance against the enslavement, ill treatment and exploitation of the Dalits. Even as the power structures of caste continue to operate within the Church to discriminate against the neo-converts, early echoes of resistance lend a history-making significance to the narrative, making it a radical departure for the times.

Paul Chirakkarode is a prolific writer of novels, short stories, biographies and numerous critical and political tracts in Malayalam. Some of his significant works include *Pulayathara* and the trilogy *Mathil* (Walls), *Nizhal* (Shadows) and *Velicham* (Light). An orator and human rights activist, he is one of the pioneers of Dalit Literary Movement in India, who used the power of the pen to raise consciousness about the subhuman life of the Dalits in Kerala. In a review of *Pulayathara*, noted Malayalam novelist K. R. Meera hints at the empathy with which Chirakkarode writes of the downtrodden people: “Born to a converted Christian preacher, Paul Chirakkarode in his books provides not just the peripheral view most readers are accustomed to, but also an intense engaging experience of bleeding with the people who have been brutally exploited for generations ” (1). *Pulayathara* brings to light the disjuncture between the promised sense of equality and the lived experience of discrimination that conversion to Christianity had in store for Dalits. This paper attempts, with reference to the novel, an exposition of the dialectics of proselytization and Dalit resistance, a motif that recurs in Chirakkarode’s oeuvre.

With the arrival of the Christian missionaries along with the imperialists in India and the advent of proselytization in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, a good number of people from the depressed Hindu castes converted to Christianity for uplift in social status, as people moved out of the ambit of the oppressive caste system upon conversion to Christianity: “Conversion appealed as at least an apparent escape from the caste system for those who despaired of achieving improvement of their lot within the system” (Forrester 114). But the reality was vastly different in Kerala because of the presence of a privileged Christian group, the Syrian Christians. The Syrian Christians of Kerala, believed to be descendants of high caste (Brahmin) converts of the Apostle St. Thomas in the first century A.D., were people of consequence, commanding the respect and esteem of the upper caste Hindus. By the time the Portuguese arrived in the 15<sup>th</sup> century, the Syrian Christians had, for centuries, “been encapsulated within caste society, regarded by Hindus as a caste, occupying a recognized (and high) place within the caste hierarchy” (Forrester 14). The Portuguese carried on zealous missionary efforts to convert the masses to Roman Catholicism, but mostly from the fishing communities: “The new converts accordingly became unambiguously separate

Latin Christians and no attempt was made to integrate them with the Syrian Church” (Forrester 104). The British missionaries who arrived with the imperialists were appalled by the social inequities among the various classes, in particular the degraded state of the slaves belonging to the low castes (Dempsey 22). It was resolved in the conference of 1857 that “the slaves are to be introduced into our Churches and to partake of the ordinances of the religion and stand on the same footing as other members of the Church” (cited in Dempsey 22). “Attracted by this novel idea, the slaves flocked into the Christian Church,” writes Dempsey (166). Evangelization was extremely successful among the Dalits. As Forrester notes, “by the 1880s there were some 16,000 CMS Christians, of whom more than half were of Pulaya stock and roughly a quarter were Syrians” (108). The missionaries strove to claim for the converts the status and privileges enjoyed by the Syrian Christians. Ironically, while fighting for the rights of the neo-converts, the missionaries held separate congregations for Syrians and lower caste converts as a temporary expedient, though they “kept up pressure on the Syrians to admit converts to their congregations” (ibid).

The high-caste Christians treated the neo-converts as low-caste Christians and discriminated against them, though they initially enticed them to Christianity with promises of dignity and deliverance from the injustices of the caste system, notes Srinivasan (22). Ninan Koshy writes in *Caste in the Kerala Churches* that “the exclusiveness of the Syrian Christians as a distinct caste and their apparent determination to perpetuate this” has contributed to inter-caste tensions in the Kerala Church (cited in Forrester 110). The status quo of class distinctions was strictly maintained within the Christian church in Kerala in the post-independence era too.

As translator Catherine Thankamma notes in her “Introduction” to the novel, Chirakkarode’s *Pulayathara* “is the earliest literary narrative that records the debilitating complexities of Dalit Christian experience and the hollowness of religious conversion in Kerala’s caste-ridden society. It is undocumented history, history from the margins” (x). It primarily depicts the exploitation and marginalization of the converts from lower castes and illustrates how the power structures in place quelled the early voices of revolt using any expedient available. However, the novel culminates with the portrayal of their “tentative steps towards self-articulation and affirmation of identity” (xii).

The Church in Kerala saw in its acutest form “the problems arising from having Christians of widely different caste backgrounds and social status within one church,” notes Forrester (97). In *Pulayathara*, though the Hilltop Church is established with the aim of “the spiritual and material growth of the downtrodden people of that land,” the mission fails as “the

upper-caste Christians could never view the Pulaya Christians as their brothers” (Chirakkarode85). Custodian Thomas’ words encapsulate the notions of superiority that Syrian Christians harbour and the resultant disdainful attitude towards the low-caste converts: “We are the old Christians aren’t we? The ones with ancestry. We baptised some Parayar and Pulayar, sprinkled holy water on their foreheads, drew the sign of the Cross, and made them Christians .... We, the early Christians, did not like it. But the missionaries insisted on it” (84). These words are indicative of the general superior attitude of the upper caste Syrian Christians in Kerala, the social prejudices that marginalized the new Christians and the contempt in which the neo-converts were held on grounds of class and caste inferiority in the hegemonic feudal social order.

Historically, though lured into Christianity with a promise of erasure of the stigma of untouchability from their lives, the converts were soon made to realize that this promise of social equality was not to be honoured. Converts from labourer and artisan castes were seldom accorded equal status with their Syrian patrons. Bitter disappointment awaited the low caste Hindus, who converted to Christianity to shed the stigma of their inferiority in the eyes of other Hindus, as “the Syrians reacted, on the whole, precisely in the manner of a Hindu caste,” notes Forrester (114). The Syrian Christians, who considered themselves a class apart, despised the neo-converts, and asserted their distinction and power in the caste framework.

The power structures in the traditional Syrian Christian community worked against the newly converted Christians to reinforce caste and class divisions. This is amply illustrated in *Pulayathara*. Caste bigotry surfaces in its monstrous form when the name of Preacher Pathros is suggested for speaker at the monthly special meeting to be held in the Hilltop Church at Pallithara. He is one among the low caste people who joined the Church in order to eke out a living working in the fields owned by the Church, and cherished the hope that “when he died his body would be buried in the Mission-owned cemetery...The dream of a grave for the corpse—what other dream could the Pulayan have, he who worked himself to exhaustion every day?” (Chirakkarode187). Pathros, who lives in “a low-roofed thatched shack on the southern side of the Church” and does “bone breaking labour” in the fields, is a “devout believer” (36) and an eloquent speaker with extraordinary powers, whose “voice was enough for waves of repentance to surge in the congregation of the Hilltop Church” (39). But, the machinations of Custodian Thomas - a descendent of “an ancient family” whose beginning could be “traced to one of the ancient Brahmin families” converted by St. Thomas and a “representative of the upper castes” – were directed at rescuing the prestige of his clan and saving his friends from the fate of having to listen to a “Pelayan preacher”

speak (39-41). A youngster like Paulos interrogates why an excellent orator among them is denied the opportunity to preach, “Why didn’t they call our Preacher Pathros? Why bring an unknown preacher from somewhere?” (62). However, “the inclination to question grew cold and died” (ibid) as the acquiescence of his fellow beings nullifies the possibility of any meaningful resistance: “Heated thoughts filled the minds of those poor men, rushing into their hearts – thoughts that they could not articulate” (61).

The neo-convert metamorphoses into “a new being” when he becomes a Christian. The new Christian participates whole heartedly in all the activities of the Church. A devout believer like OuthaPulayan has no qualms about giving up the ancestral way of life he had known until then: “From the time he had joined the Church, OuthaPulayan had lived like a true Christian. Drinking, drum-beating, performing black magic, it had all come to an end. He had never walked that path again” (65). The Church instils into him the inviolability and sacrosanctity of its decrees: “There are certain rules to be followed by the Parayan and Pulayan who join the true religion. That set of rules keeps his life tightly bound. They are not something anyone can break. Even if one had the strength to do it, one should not. Religion forbids it” (66). Veiled threats of eviction and excommunication follow when it is brought to the attention of the Church that, “People of another faith were staying in the true Christian Pathros’s home” (95). As a tenant in the mission-owned land, Pathros has “the good fortune of being able to grow some ten shoots of tapioca and make a meal of it” during the lean season (64). His sense of gratitude is so intense that it virtually blinds him to the fact that he is a victim caught in the web of exploitation spun by the Church: “He should be more loyal than other members of the Church” (67), Pathros tells himself.

The Dalit labourers, who live in the property of the Church and do back-breaking work – women join the menfolk too – in the paddy fields all day till nightfall, have no rights to any of the produce they strive so hard to cultivate and harvest. Chirakkarode attributes this to the “greed of the class in power,” “eager to get hold of the Church’s wealth” (133). Pathros, one of the non-beneficiaries, “had no complaints. He did not even think that they were denying him his right” (50). “Complaints arise only when there is awareness, isn’t that so?” (50), asks Chirakkarode, who takes strong exception to the superstructure of exploitation that the Church has imposed on the Dalit labour class and bewails the lack of awareness that has kept the labour class in a state of virtual enslavement for centuries.

Chirakkarode criticises the caste and class discrimination that lies deeply entrenched in all areas of the operational structure of the Church. Christianity belied the expectations of the

neo-converts in the matter of erasing caste distinctions and in according to them the dignity that was denied within the Hindu fold. The semblance of equality that the Church brought with proselytization, for all intents and purposes, is a mere farce, as caste feelings remain as strong as ever below the surface. *Pulayathara* exposes the social bigotry inscribed in the practices of the Church. For instance, the funeral services foreground the social disparity and hierarchy among the congregation that the Church keeps buoyant for its own self-serving interests. The passing of wealthy Syrian Christians is observed with pomp: “When a rich man died even his death became an event” (Chirakkarode 74). The stark differences in the physical structure of the tombs of the Syrian Christians and the graves of the neo-converts is another case in point: The “sandy mounds were the graves of new Christians and poverty-stricken Syrian Christians. Those graves would erode over a period of time... there were no memorials for them” (74). The positioning of the laity during mass also reinforces the inferior status of the neo-converts:

The new Christians in front, behind them the ones with ancient Christian lineages... at the back of the church there were benches with backrests. The upper-caste Christians heard the true Gospel leaning back against these comfortably... However, right in front, woven mats were laid for the low-caste Christians. Their fate was to sit on the floor. But they had no complaints about it. That was because they had never considered this a grievance at all.” (55)

Kandankoran, who joins the Church and assumes a new name Thoma in order to marry a new Christian’s daughter, has a rude awakening regarding the true status of the Dalit convert: “So what if the Pulayan receives the Christian faith, if the holy of holies baptism water falls on his forehead, if a cross is drawn on his forehead, if he gets a new name? All that does not change his *pula*, his untouchable status” (115). He laments the fact that, as a new Christian, he does not have “an identity of his own” and that he, as a “cursed creature” (ibid), “would never know peace again” (116). Kandankoran feels orphaned in that Church and its surroundings. This was not his world. His world of labour lay far away. Those fields called out to him. He could hear it with the ears of his soul. But he couldn’t answer because he had become the slave of a new religion” (150). He becomes the representative Dalit Christian voice of regret at the loss of inheritance from forefathers: “Why did this name ‘ThomaPulayan’ happen?” he bemoans (172).

Chirakkarode’s narrative echoes the waves of change that were sweeping across the land under the influence of macro-movements like social reformation, communist consciousness, efforts at educating the depressed classes that were taken up with vigour by the Christian missionaries, and so on. If speaking against the feudal lord was a sacrilege

inconceivable to the dependant labourers in times of yore, *Pulayathara* envisions the movement towards a social change in the stray voices that question the Church's exploitation of the Dalit Christians, a significant first step towards gaining the agency to resist exclusion: "Did you make us join the Church to make us slaves?" (47); "If all of us share the same heaven, why don't we all sit on the same mat in Church?" (134); "Why was all this done if caste superiority existed within the Church? Was it not better that the Pulayar and Parayar did not join the Church?" (101); "But if slavery continued even after conversion, wasn't that bad?" (101). Chirakkarode comments that, "In the storm raised by that question the foundation of the Hilltop Church was shaking" (47). However, he adds: "No one could find an acceptable answer... Their selfhood had not grown that much" (ibid); "what the solution was and how to find it was something they did not know—not possessing the knowledge for that" (191). Thus, lack of sufficient awareness to find answers and to initiate suitable action deters the translation of words of resistance into deeds for a long time.

In *Pulayathara*, Chirakkarode indicates the role played by communists in infusing this much-needed awareness and a spirit of rebellion among those mired in the morass of casteism and discrimination. In a context where Christianity failed to deliver the promises of equality and brotherhood, Communism, touting notions of classlessness and equal rights, captured the imagination of Kerala in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The origins of Communism, Robin Jeffrey comments in his article "Peasant Movements and the Communist Party," were situated in the context of the collapse of "social and religious structures" and the rise of a situation in which communism provided the answers that gods and ceremonies did not (cited in Menon 192-193). Following the formation of the Communist Party of India in 1924, Communism made its presence felt in large cities and industrial centres like Bombay and Calcutta at a time when "the workers were sunk in mass poverty, ignorant of their rights and deprived of leadership" (Balakrishnan 35). In Kerala, a unit of the party was secretly established only in 1939, notes Nossiter in *Communism in Kerala* (65). Led by a concern for the working class and peasantry, the communists organized the peasants and workers, spreading the doctrine that "Gandhian techniques were ineffective and the way of the red flag was the only way for the liberation of the toiling people" (Balakrishnan 115). Leaders like A. K. Gopalan worked among the masses and fought for people's causes, which gained great popularity for the party. They were looked upon as champions of the have-nots and the upholders of the rights of the peasants, students, factory workers, labourers, etcetera (Nair 76). The Communists prioritized crucial issues like land reform, debt relief, labour problems in the agitations, which helped increase the electoral base and took them to victory in the 1957 assembly elections (Balakrishnan

12). Kerala became the first state in the world, “apart from the miniscule Italian principality of San Marino, to form a democratically elected communist government” (Menon 1). However, its attempts to subvert vested interests of the bourgeoisie in land and education triggered powerful opposition which culminated in the Liberation Struggle of 1959, leading to the dismissal of the ministry on 31 July 1959.

Regarding communists’ attitude to the issue of caste in Kerala, there are differing views. If Dilip M. Menon underscores the “reshaping of communism into a doctrine of caste equality” (2), Balakrishnan denounces the early communists for refraining from the work of eradicating “the inhuman practice of untouchability and related miseries” on the grounds that untouchability being “a religious affair of the Hindus,” the socialists, “opposed to all religions,” could not “support a measure aimed at religious reformism” (50). M. G. S. Narayanan points out that “Seldom did a member of the *Paraya* or *Pulaya* community climb to the top leadership of the Communist party in spite of their claim that they stood for the depressed classes” (xix). The compromising stance of the communists as regards the caste issue is hinted at by Selig Harrison who writes in *India: The Most Dangerous Decades* that the communist success is largely due to their ability to identify themselves with “the chauvinism of region and caste” and their “rootedness in the communal fabric of society” (cited in Menon 193).

Nossiter, discussing the effects of the communist government’s much-famed Agrarian Relations Bill in *Marxist State Governments in India* (60), holds that it had a limited impact on the social structure of Kerala. Though landlordism was virtually eliminated by it, the long-drawn-out process of legislation allowed landowning families to spread the surplus above the land ceiling among their extended kin. The transfer of proprietary rights undoubtedly benefited all classes of tenants but most of them belonged to the favoured castes and communities. Those untouchable castes who toiled in the fields as labourers gained the right to their hut and a few cents of land surrounding it, but this did not fundamentally alter their place at the bottom of the social and economic hierarchy.

In Kerala, the landlord class of Syrian Christians and the communists have always had a troubled relationship. Christians were anti-communists primarily because the Church of Kerala was conservative and also because the communist government made attempts to wrest control of education from the Church (Nossiter, *Marxist State Governments in India* 71). As for the communists, the early Christian penetration of the lowest Hindu castes circumscribed the progress of their movement, especially in Travancore and Cochin (Nossiter, *Communism in Kerala* 78).



In *Pulayathara*, Chirakkarode outlines the impact of Communism in awakening awareness, provoking resistance and unifying the labourers to fight for their rights. The Church takes precautionary measures to pre-empt any subversion of the authority of its power. Nevertheless, Communism plays a significant part in creating awareness among the Dalit Christians about their degraded state and the need to question the manipulative institutions and power structures that have been in place for centuries. Kochumolumbram, the area where converted Christians live, is nicknamed ‘Moscow’ by the locals, as “most of the new Christians in that area had communist sympathies” (Chirakkarode 47). When the Church warns the congregation, “Particularly in these times, there is a Satan. Its name is Communism” (148), Thoma readily commiserates with the communists, “Were they not trying to bring justice and equality in the society?” (149). When Daniel Master explains the patterns of discrimination and exploitation to them, “the frustration that was frothing within each one of them acquired a distinct shape. The awareness they gained was precious” (192). Chirakkarode captures the awakening among the Dalit Christians thus: The new Christians were forming a union of agricultural labourers... They knew many things they had known before. They asked questions boldly. Class sense had awakened in them. When they hear that they have been exploited for centuries, when they realise that the fruits of their labour were enjoyed by rich farmers and landowners, won’t they be furious? The instinct to resist is innate. It cannot be stopped. (47)

The recovery of the agency of the Dalit Christian is embodied in the youngster Paulos who “brimmed with the zeal of rebellion. It had happened when he realized for the first time that he was marginalized. There sprouted within him the confidence to resist anything and anybody, the feeling that he could sweep aside whatever resistance might rise against him” (166). Conducting a meeting on the mission grounds without the permission of the Church is the “first enactment of that great resistance” (ibid). Even OuthaPulayan musters the courage to question the committee decision to invite a speaker “without the knowledge of the dark-skinned committee members, without their consent” (160): “The thing is, our people have been cheated by Achan and Custodian Thomas. Their songs and prayers are meaningless, utterly meaningless; they have enslaved us in the name of the Church” (164). The realisation that the upper-caste Christians control and enjoy the fruits of the wealth of the Christian congregation, while the “poor Parayan and Pulayan had no right to it” (163), gives rise to the question, “Where did the huge income from all that wealth go?” (ibid). The novel celebrates the rise of the subaltern voices of dissent that demand a separate congregation for Dalit Christians, with their own bishop.

Chirakkarode also alludes to another tool that has contributed to the denting of the power structures of caste and class – education. Along with the communist movement, the spread of English education marked the beginning of a social awakening in Kerala, which derailed the values that safeguarded the interests of the upper castes. As Eapen writes, the Church Missionary Society missionaries converted the depressed classes, and used education as an instrument for their social uplift (166-167). In the agrarian setup, the exploited agricultural workers resigned themselves to their plight, as their peasant masters supported them in times of distress (23). Also, it was believed among the lower castes that God created the difference in the social and economic status of people, and if they reconciled to their fate of subjection and subordination without a murmur they would be rewarded by God with a higher caste in their subsequent births (Bhai 103). But the impact of education shook up such beliefs. As Menon writes, education was seen as the panacea for poverty and inequality, and the communists fuelled the desire for education, which was met by the increasing opportunities provided by a hierarchy of elementary, secondary and high schools (144-145). The rise in literacy found expression in the number of reading rooms that were established both in the countryside and in towns. *Prabhatham*, launched in 1936 with E. M. S. Namboodiripad, as its editor, catered mainly to workers and peasants (146). There followed an awakening that brought with it a desire for material prosperity and better living conditions among the poor and the underprivileged lot.

*Pulayathara* denounces the strategy of subjugation by which the lower classes were kept in a state of ignorance for long. Even in the era of change and social reform, governmental efforts at encouraging the education of lower castes come to naught, as “the heads of schools, blinded by caste norms, would not permit it,” as indicated in the novel (Chirakkarode 81). Pathros, attributes his lack of education to the exploitative social norms: If only he had learned to read... The need for education had never stuck him so hard before. But had the Pulayar deliberately decided not to study? No! Society—controlled by a set of norms that the upper castes had created in the name of God—would not permit it. Those norms were like iron, they could not be challenged or overcome. (80)

Education instils attitudes favourable for social advancement among the Dalit Christians: “Of late some of their children had started to attend the English school” (191), of whom, it is hoped, at least a few would pass the examination and find employment. Chirakkarode lauds Kandankoran/Thoma’s act of resistance in naming his son “Thiruvanchan Pulayan” after his father: “He would not allow another new Christian to be offered to the Church. Let his son at least be free” (197). Kandankoran dreams of a better life for his son through

education: “I will send my son to school, educate him. I will not let him become some landlord’s slave. You wait and see” (ibid).

It is true that religious conversion promoted by the agency of the missionaries, the communist crusade and the tool of education offered means to resist the power grid of caste and class in the society of Kerala. Mass religious conversion was one of the earliest strategies at the macro-level that attempted to dent the power structures of caste in the society of Kerala. It was a bid made by the lower castes to escape the power politics of caste in Hinduism. But it failed to pay off, as the Syrian Christians, who claimed an upper-caste position by virtue of both their avowed Brahmin ancestry and their exalted status as wealthy landlords, followed all the ostracism practices of high-caste Hindus against the lower castes. Chirakkarode, in *Pulayathara* illustrates that conversion to Christianity has not made a real difference to the social status of the lower castes. The stigma of caste is not eradicated from the lives of the Dalit Christians in Pallithara, for the neo-converts are seen to be subjected to caste prejudice and the same sort of ostracism they faced from Hindu upper castes. The new converts are treated with contempt by the aristocratic Syrian Christian community, who consider themselves a class apart. Chirakkarode points to the general awakening among the exploited classes which was triggered by the communist movement that underscored equality and opportunity for all; but whether it has translated into any meaningful erasure of social margins from a caste perspective, he leaves largely unstated. He, undoubtedly, reposes faith in education as a tool for social change. Chirakkarode’s assertion, “The new Christian would come awake. What would the result be?” (135), reflects this hope for a better future for the Dalits.

## Works Cited

Balakrishnan, Dr. E. *History of the Communist Movement in Kerala*. Kurukshetra, 1998.

Bhai, Dr. L. Thara. *Changing Patterns of Caste & Class Relations in South India: Social Stratification and Social Mobility*. Gian, 1987.

Chirakkarode, Paul. *Pulayathara*. Translated by Catherine Thankamma, OUP, 2019.

Dempsey, Corinne G. *Kerala Christian Sainthood: Collisions of Culture and Worldview in South India*. Oxford UP, 2001.

Eapen, Dr. K. V. *Church Missionary Society and Education in Kerala*. Kollett, 1985.

Forrester, Duncan B. *Caste and Christianity: Attitudes and Policies on Caste of Anglo-Saxon Protestant Missions in India*. Curzon P, 1979.

Meera, K.R. Review of *Pulayathara*, by Paul Chirakkarode. *The Hindu*, 24 August 2019, [www.thehindu.com](http://www.thehindu.com). Accessed 10 Sept. 2019.

Menon, Dilip M. *Caste, Nationalism and Communism in South India: Malabar 1900-1948*. Cambridge UP, 1994.

Nair, R. Ramakrishnan. *How Communists Came to Power in Kerala*. The Kerala Academy of Political Science, 1965.

Narayanan, Dr. M. G. S. Introduction. *History of the Communist Movement in Kerala*. By Dr. E. Balakrishnan. Kurukshetra, 1998, pp. xiii-xxiii.

Nossiter, T. J. *Communism in Kerala: A Study in Political Adaptation*. Oxford UP, 1982.

---. *Marxist State Governments in India: Politics, Economics and Society*. Pinter, 1988.

Srinivasan, Dr. M. S. *Conversion to Christianity: Aggression in India*. First Publication Protection Trust, 2000.

Thankamma, Catherine. "Introduction." *Pulayathara* by Paul Chirakkarode, OUP, 2019, pp. vii-xii.