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DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY
Delhi School of Economics, University of Delhi
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FRIDAY, 14TH JANUARY 2022 AT 3:00 PM

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**JANAKI
ABRAHAM**



**‘SANSKRITISATION’ AS APPROPRIATION:
A VIEW FROM THE SREE NARAYANA GURU
MOVEMENT IN KERALA.**

Abstract:

In this paper I argue that the study of Sree Narayana Guru’s praxis forces us to question the popular understanding of ‘sanskritization’ as imitation or emulation of ‘upper caste’ rituals and practices for the purpose of seeking caste mobility. Given that the practice of caste has fundamentally been about exclusivity and denial, sanskritization needs to be seen as a process that involves appropriating what had been denied due to exclusive caste privileges. Sree Narayana’s Guru’s movement then indicates that sanskritization should be seen as a political act which seeks to challenge caste rules of the time.

The Speaker:

Janaki Abraham teaches at the Department of Sociology, Delhi School of Economics, Delhi University. Her areas of interest include the study of gender, caste, family and kinship, visual cultures and urban sociology. She currently holds the Honorary Sree Narayana Guru Chair at the Mahatma Gandhi University, Kottayam. She has been a fellow at the Nehru Memorial Museum and Library, an Erasmus Mundus scholar, and a visiting fellow at the British Academy. She was Book Reviews Editor of *Contributions to Indian Sociology* (2011-16) and has coedited *Critical Themes in Indian Sociology* (2019).