

DR. ABIN THOMAS

Global Academy of Agriculture and Food Security
The Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies and The Roslin Institute
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ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

Research Fellow: Global Academy of Agriculture and Food Security, The University of Edinburgh, March 2019-

Responsibilities in this role:

I am conducting an anthropological investigation into antimicrobial resistance (AMR) in India. As part of the [DOSA project](#), my research will contribute to the development of user-informed diagnostics for AMR by tracing the human behaviour in primary health centres, and veterinary and aquaculture settings. I am also studying the use of antibiotics in [North-East India](#) by following their various movements through land, kitchen, and into the clinic.

EDUCATION

India Institute, King's College London, United Kingdom:

PhD in Anthropology (2018)

- Thesis title: 'An Anthropological Study of Organ Transfer in Kerala, India'. Supervised by: Dr. Kriti Kapila and Dr. Carlo Caduff
- Examiners: Professor Dame Marilyn Strathern and Dr Jacob Copeman
- Viva: Passed without corrections

Delhi University, New Delhi, India:

M. Phil. in Political Science (2013)

- Percentage: 62.8 (First Class)
- Dissertation: 'The Public Role of Religion: A Case Study of the Syro-Malabar Church in Kerala (1989-2009)'. Supervised by: Dr. Mohinder Singh

University of Hyderabad, Hyderabad, India:

M.A. in Political Science (2010)

- GPA: 9.06 on a scale of 10 (Distinction)

Mahatma Gandhi University, Kottayam, India:

B. Sc. in Physics (2008)

- Percentage: 87.1 (Distinction)

ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENTS

- Second rank in M.A., University of Hyderabad, 2010

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

- M. A. dissertation, titled ‘*Understanding Twin Toleration: The Syro- Malabar Church, the State and Education in Kerala.*’ Supervised by Prof. Jyotirmaya Sharma, Hyderabad University, 2010.
- Helped the Centre for Public Policy Research develop the concept note for *Kerala International Education University Hub* proposal, submitted on behalf of a client to Government of Kerala in 2012.
- Research internship titled ‘*Area Sabha and its relevance in Urban Governance in Cochin Corporation*’ at the Centre for Public Policy Research (CPPR), Cochin, in December 2008. Research focused on the concept of Area Sabha, mentioned in the Model Nagar Raj Bill. Developed a paper explaining how the *area sabha* concept, if adopted, can improve the representative nature of local urban governing bodies. It was presented in a discussion on ‘*Area Sabha and its Relevance in the Context of Urban Reforms in Cochin*’ organised by the CPPR on 19 December 2008 at Ernakulam Public Library.

SCHOLARSHIPS AND GRANTS

- Seed Fund, Department of Global Health and Social medicine, King’s College London (2018)
- Small Grant, India Institute, King’s College London (2018)
- Graduate School International Research Studentship for Ph. D, King’s College London (2013-2016)
- Conference Grant from graduate fund, India Institute, King’s College London (2014)
- Junior Research Fellowship for M. Phil., University of Delhi (2010 – 2012)
- University Achiever’s Award, University of Hyderabad (March 2009, December 2009)

COLLABORATIVE GRANTS

- The London Interdisciplinary Social Science Training Partnership award for ‘Spread your news: academic research & impact in the media’ series targeting PhD students and Early Career Researchers, King’s College London (2019)

MEMBERSHIPS

- Royal Anthropological Institute (2021-
- British Association for South Asian Studies (2014 –2019)
- Culture, Medicine and Power Research Group, King’s College London (2014 – 2019)
- Religion, Politics and Society Research Group, King’s College London (2013 –2018)

PUBLICATIONS

- “Nipah outbreak in South India: Some preliminary thoughts from an Anthropologist”, September 2019. <https://www.ed.ac.uk/global-agriculture-food-security/news/blogs-and-newsletters/nipah-outbreak-in-south-india-some-preliminary-thos>
- “In Pursuit of Affordable Organ Transplants: Reflections from India”, June 2017. <http://thesp.leeds.ac.uk/2017/07/in-pursuit-of-affordable-organ-transplants-reflections-from-india/>
- “Kerala’s Public Policy Crisis in Fighting Cancer”, June 2014. <http://www.cppr.in/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/KERALA%E2%80%99S-PUBLIC-POLICY-CRISIS-IN-FIGHTING-CANCER.pdf>

PUBLICATIONS (in preparation)

- Monograph: “Organ Transfer in Kerala: The Making of an Exemplary Discourse.”
- Article: “Perceptions of animal health among livestock farmers in Assam,” for the *Frontiers in Veterinary Science*
- Review Essay: “On the globalization of organ transplantation” for the *Political and Legal Anthropology Review*

INVITED PRESENTATIONS

- “*Pledging of organs and the making of bioavailability in South India*,” Anthropology Seminar Series, the Department of Anthropology, 19 February 2019, University of Sussex.
- “*Pledging of organs and the making of bioavailability in South India*,” Anthropology of Health Research Group (AHRG) Seminar, 28 November 2018, Durham University.
- “*Ethics in Fieldwork*”, Global India European Training Network Conference, 23- 24 April 2018, King’s India Institute, King’s College London.
- “*An organ transplantation through the writ of habeas corpus in Kerala, India*”, Organs, Tissues, Contexts: Politics and Practices in the era of Transplant medicine, the Early Career’s Research symposium, 22 September 2017, University of Liverpool.

PAPER PRESENTATIONS

- “Understanding anti-microbial Resistance: Towards an anthropology of knowledge,” ASA19: Anthropological Perspectives on Global Challenges, 3-6 September 2019, University of East Anglia.
- “The representation of organ transfer and the making of knowledge: A story from Kerala, India,” “Hybrid Minds/Hybrid Bodies” Exhibition and Symposium, 7-9 August 2019, Concordia University.
- “Organ transplants and the management of death in Kerala, India,” The British Association for South Asian Studies Annual Conference, 3-5 April 2019, Durham University.
- “*In search of life: An exploration of post-transplant life in Kerala, India*”, Workshop on “Medicalisation of death and dying: systems, practices and politics,” 13- 14 September 2018, Université libre de Bruxelles (ULB).
- “*The representation of organ transfer and the making of knowledge: A story from Kerala, India*”, “Art, Materiality, and Representation” conference, 1-3 June 2018, British Museum/SOAS.
- “*More than ethical: the context of organ pledging in Kerala*”, Anthropology in London Day 2017, 13 June 2017, University College London.
- “*Transplant fundraising as ‘holy begging’: A narrative from Kerala, India*”, “Boundaries, Bodies, Borders: The Global Exchange of Human Body Parts” conference, 5 May 2017, University of Leeds.
- “*The pedagogy of organ donation campaigns: A critique from Kerala*,” Royal Anthropological Institute Student Conference, 20- 22 April 2017, Durham University.
- “*Suffering and managing the individual self: the politics of death and religion in Kerala, India*”, 8th Postgraduate Bioethics Conference, 04- 05 September 2014, University of Southampton.
- “*Claims on Sovereignty and Secular Body: Politics of Death and Syro-Malabar Catholic Church in Kerala*”, Authority & Political Technologies 2014, 02- 03 June 2014, University of Warwick.
- “*Political theology of suffering: Syro-Malabar Catholic Church and the politics of death in Kerala*”, Christianity in South Asia: Cultural and Historical interactions, 17 May 2014, Wolfson College, Oxford.
- “*The bioeconomy of ‘obligation’, ‘empathy’ and ‘donation’: Contemporary reflections on organ donation in Kerala*”, The British Association for South Asian Studies Annual Conference, 02- 04 April 2014, Royal Holloway.

ORGANISED WORKSHOP

- “*Laboratories of health: human and non-human subjects*”, in collaboration with the Department of Global Health and Social Medicine and India Institute, 1 June 2018, King’s College London.

ORGANISED PANELS

- Co-organiser of the panel “Of scientists, samples and evidence: Observation(s) as the laboratory”, with Fatima Elfitouri, Anthropology and Geography: Dialogues Past, Present and Future Conference, 4 - 7 June 2020, British Museum/SOAS [cancelled due to illness].
- Co-organiser of the panel “New immortalities: Medical practices, care and the management of death in Contemporary South Asia,” with Prof. Bob Simpson, The British Association for South Asian Studies Annual Conference, 3-5 April 2019, Durham University.
- Co-organiser of the panel “Organ transplantation and art: The ethics and politics of representation”, with Prof. John Wynne, Art, Materiality, and Representation conference, 1-3 June 2018, British Museum/SOAS.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

- Graduate Teaching Assistant, The Department of Global Health and Social Medicine, King’s College London, January 2017- January 2019. Delivered guest lectures on various modules. Led seminars on both the undergraduate modules (*Introduction to Social Medicine, Case Studies in Global Health and Social Medicine, and Research Practice & Design Studio*), and postgraduate modules (*Foundations in Global Health & Social Medicine and Designing Qualitative Research for Social Science and Health*). Also marked assignments, held office hours for students, and assisted with administering the module and developing the reading list.

MENTORSHIP

- Co-supervisor, for Rebecca Hampson, ‘*Cultural and sociological challenges facing female subsistence farmers in Malawi and their impact on animal welfare*’ (dissertation title) for The International Animal Welfare, ethics and Law MSc (IAWEL), The University of Edinburgh.

ADMINISTRATIVE EXPERIENCE

- Research Assistant, for Dr. Kriti Kapila, King’s College London, June 15-August 15, 2018 (Duties included bibliographic and other research for a forthcoming handbook on Law and Society in South Asia and editorial assistance with publication).
- Summer School Assistant, Global Health & Social Justice, Undergraduate Summer School, King’s College London, June 2016 – July 2016 (convened by Prof. Anthea Tinker and Prof. Nikolas Rose) and June 2017 – July 2017 (convened by Dr. Dominique Behague) respectively.
- Examination Invigilator, King’s College London, March 2017 – March 2019
- My Reading List Builder, King’s College London, June 2016 – December 2016

MEDIA

- Quoted in the *Hindustan Times* article “Why Kerala is leading the way in organ donation” on 4 September 2016.

PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

- Honorary ‘Research Fellow’ (Global Health), the Centre for Public Policy Research, (February 2021-
- Committee member, The Human Ethical Review Committee (HERC), The Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies, (September 2019-
- Global Academy Representative, The Easter Bush Research Seminar Committee, The Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies and The Roslin Institute, University of Edinburgh (October 2019-
- Reviewer for *BioSocieties* and *Medicine Anthropology Theory*

LEADERSHIP RESPONSIBILITIES

- Global Health Ambassador, King's College London (2018-2019)
- Student Representative for Political Science department, Hyderabad University (2009 – 2010)
- Students' Coordinator, Centre for Public Policy Research, Cochin, (2008 – 2013)
- Programme Coordinator, Students Outreach, Centre for Public Policy Research, Cochin, (2006 – 2008)

COMPUTER LITERACY

- Microsoft Office (Word, Excel, PowerPoint); Mac OS X; and NVivo

LANGUAGES

- Proficient speaking, reading and writing of: English and Malayalam
- Proficient reading of: Hindi