

Dr. Renny Thomas

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Renny Thomas is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Sociology, Jesus and Mary College, University of Delhi. He received his PhD (Sociology) from Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), New Delhi. His research interests include **Science and Technology Studies, Material Religion, Sociology of Religion, Science and Religion, History of Science and Scientific Thought, Scientific Method, History of Anthropology, Literary Anthropology, Feminist Science Studies, Anthropology of Rationality and Rituals**. He is the recipient of **Charles Wallace Fellowship in Social Anthropology (2017-2018), Queen's University, Belfast, Northern Ireland, UK**. He is also a recipient of **American Academy of Religion's Collaborative International Research Grant (2015-2016), New York, USA**. He has written and lectured extensively in the field of science and religion. He is currently finalising his manuscript on science and religion in India. He is also working on an edited volume on scientific method.

Awards and Recognition

- 1. Charles Wallace Fellowship in Social Anthropology, Queen's University, Belfast, Northern Ireland, UK (2017-2018).**
- 2. Collaborative International Research Grant, American Academy of Religion, New York, USA (2015-2016).**
- 3. Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR) Doctoral Fellowship, 2013-2015.**
- 4. Jawaharlal Nehru Memorial Fund Doctoral Fellowship (JNMF), 2013-2014, Teen Murti House, New Delhi (declined).**
- 5. University Grants Commission – Junior and Senior Research Fellowships in Sociology, Delhi (2008-2013).**

RENNY THOMAS

PUBLICATIONS

JOURNAL ARTICLES

1. **2018.** “Beyond Conflict and Complementarity: Science and Religion in Contemporary India.” *Science, Technology and Society* (Sage), 23 (1) 47-64.
2. **2018** with Robert Geraci. "Religious Rites and Scientific Communities: *Ayudha Puja* as 'Culture' at the Indian Institute of Science." *Zygon: Journal of Religion and Science* (Wiley) 53 (1): 95-122.
3. **2017.** “Atheism and Unbelief among Indian Scientists: Towards an Anthropology of Atheism(s).” *Society and Culture in South Asia* (Sage), 3(1): 45-67.

CHAPTERS IN EDITED VOLUMES

1. **Forthcoming.** Atheism in India: Twentieth Century and Beyond. In *Cambridge History of Atheism* (Eds. Michael Ruse and Stephen Bullivant). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
2. **2019.** Rational Believers: Religion, Spirituality and Tradition among Indian Scientists. In *Science, Belief and Society: International Perspectives on Religion, Non-Religion and the Public Understanding of Science* (Eds. Stephen Jones, Tom Kaden and Rebecca Catto). Bristol, UK: Bristol University Press, and Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, pp.127-146.
3. **2018.** Narratives in Feminist Sociology of Science: Contextualizing the *Experience(s)* of Women Scientists in India. In *Re-imagining Sociology in India: Feminist Perspectives* (Eds. Gita Chadha, and M.T Joseph). London: Routledge, pp.316-337.
4. **2016.** Being Religious, Being Scientific: Science, Religion and Atheism in Contemporary India.” In *Science and Religion: East and West* (Ed. Yiftach Fehige). New York: Routledge, pp.140-157.

BOOK REVIEWS

1. **2019.** Animal Ethos: The Morality of Human-Animal Encounters in Experimental Lab Science by Lesley A. Sharp, *American Ethnologist* (Wiley), 46 (2): 536-537.
2. **2019.** Science and Religion: An Impossible Dialogue by Yves Gingras, *British Journal for the History of Science* (Cambridge University Press), 52(2): 363-364.
3. **2018.** Being Godless: Ethnographies of Atheism and Non-Religion by Ruy Blanes and Galina Oustinova-Stjepanovic. *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* (Wiley), UK, 24(4): 858-859.
4. **2018.** Trials, Tribulations and Triumphs: Life and Times of a Sociologist by T. K. Oommen, *IIC Quarterly* (India International Centre, Delhi),45(1):165-168.
5. **2015.** Trauma: A Social Theory by Jeffrey Alexander, *Society and Culture in South Asia* (Sage Publications), 1(1):102-106.
6. **2014.** Hindu Perspectives on Evolution: Darwin, Dharma and Design by C. Mackenzie Brown, *Sociology of Religion* (Oxford University Press), 75(1): 164-165.
7. **2014.** Playing the Nation Game: The Ambiguities of Nationalism in India by Benjamin Zachariah, *Seminar*, 657.

8. **2014.** Reading Marx, Weber and Durkheim Today by Susan Visvanathan, *History and Sociology of South Asia* (Sage Publications), 8(2): 221-224.

Popular Writings

1. On March for Science: Can Science and Social Science March together? *The Wire*, 22nd August 2017.
2. On Teaching and Research, *The Wire*, 4th August 2017.
3. Reviewed *Debating the Ancient and Present: A Conversation with Romila Thapar*, edited by Sasanka Perera for *The Daily Star* (Newspaper from Bangladesh, 24th August 2015, and for *Daily Mirror* (Newspaper from Srilanka, 24th August 2015).

Others

1. **2017.** Towards a Postcolonial Sociology? A Conversation with Professor Ari Sitas. *The JMC Review: An Interdisciplinary Social Science Journal of Criticism, Practice and Theory* (Jesus and Mary College, University of Delhi), 1(1): 261-276.

SELECTED INVITED LECTURES/TALKS

1. “Scientists, Tools and Religious Rites: An Anthropology of *Ayudha Puja*”, **The London Public Understanding of Science Seminar** (jointly by Department of Science and Technology Studies, UCL and LSE), at **London School of Economics, London** on 30th May 2018.
2. “Ritualising Technologies: On *Ayudha Puja*”, **Department of Social Anthropology, University of Aberdeen**, Scotland, UK, on 24th May 2018.
3. “*Science, Scientific Method and Rationality: Nehru’s Engagement with Ayurveda*”, **Department of History and Philosophy of Science, University of Cambridge, UK**, 17th May 2018.
4. “*Reading Ayudha Puja: Towards an Anthropology of Technology and Rituals*”, Anthropology Research Seminar Series, **School of History, Anthropology and Politics and Philosophy, Queen’s University, Belfast, Northern Ireland, UK**, on May 9th 2018.
5. “*Towards a Rational State: Science, Rationality and Scientific Temper in Postcolonial India*”, ‘**India Public Lecture**’, **Queens’ University Belfast, Northern Ireland, UK**, 24th April 2018.
6. “*Beyond Dualism: Anthropology of ‘Science and Religion’ in Contemporary India*”, Jointly organized by the **Departments of Religious Studies and Sociology** (‘Religion Matters’ Lecture Series), **Manhattan College, New York, USA**, 13th October 2017.
7. “*Ayudha Puja: On Machines, Rituals and Beliefs*”, **Department of History and Sociology of Science, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, USA**, 9th October 2017.
8. “*Atheism and Unbelief among Indian Scientists: Towards an Ethnography of Atheism(s)*”, Centre for Sociological Research, Faculty of Social Sciences, **University of Leuven, Belgium**, 21st December 2016.
9. “*On Machines, Rituals and Religion*”, **National Centre for Biological Sciences (NCBS-TIFR), Bangalore**, 13th October 2016.
10. “*Scientifically ‘Religious’ and Religiously ‘Scientific’: Ethnography of Science and Religion*”, Centre for Studies in Science Policy, School of Social Sciences, **Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi**, 28th Oct 2015.

11. *“Being Religious, Being Scientific: Ethnography of Science, Religion and Atheism(s) in Contemporary India”*, **Nehru Memorial Museum and Library (NMML)**, New Delhi, 30th March 2015.

PAPERS IN INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES /SYMPOSIUMS (INVITED)

1. Invited Speaker, International Symposium on Aesthetic Dimensions of Science: Beauty, Awe and Wonder in Scientific Inquiry. **Department of Sociology, The Catholic University of America**, Washington, D.C, USA, June 3-4, 2019. Title of my talk: *Wonder at Work: Scientists as Magicians of the Laboratory*.
2. **‘New Perspectives on Science and Religion in Society’ Conference**, Organised in partnership between by the Centre for Science, Knowledge and Belief in Society, Newman University, UK, University of Kent, UK, York University, Canada, and Kent State University, USA, 29th June to 1st July 2017, held in **Manchester, UK**.
3. *“Being Religious, Being Scientific: Science, Religion and Atheism in Contemporary India”*, UCSIA Summer Seminar on Religion and Culture in a Globalizing World: Questioning Our Research Frames, 3-5th September 2014, **University of Antwerp, Belgium**.
4. *“Religious and Scientific Imagination in India”*, International Summer School on Religion, Culture and Society, August 28th - September 4th, 2011, **University of Antwerp, Belgium**.
5. *“Religion among Indian Scientists”*, at the “Dealing with Controversies” **workshop with Prof. Bruno Latour**, January 1-3, 2011, **Department of Sociology, University of Delhi**.
6. *“Changing Social Contract Between Science and Society: Exploring the Case of Biotechnology in India”*, at the International Workshop on The Role of Experts in Transnational Science and Health Care Policies, 5th April 2010, **Jawaharlal Nehru Institute of Advanced Studies (JNIAS), Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi**.

SEMINARS/CONFERENCES/LECTURES- INDIA (2018-2019)

1. Invited Speaker, National Workshop, “Engaging Science: Conversation Across Disciplines”, Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, **Indian Institute of Science Education and Research (IISER)-Mohali**, Punjab, 7th to 9th November 2019. Title of my talk: Engaging with Science in India: Science, Public and Society.
2. STS, Science(s) and Society, Dept. of Humanities and Social Sciences, **Indian Institute of Information Technology (IIIT)-Guwahati**, Assam (Invited talk), 28th Sept 2019.
3. Invited Speaker, Symposium on Academic Writing, Centre for Northeast Studies and Policy Research, **Jamia Milia Islamia**, New Delhi, 12th September 2019. Title of my talk: Critiquing Manuscripts or “Reading” Manuscripts?
4. **Keynote Speaker**, National Seminar on Science, Scientism and Human Agency, Department of Sociology, **Jamia Milia Islamia**, New Delhi, 19th March 2019.
5. Invited Speaker, Weekly Colloquium, *“Brahmin(men) as Scientists and Science as Brahmins’ Calling”*, Zakir Hussain Centre for Educational Studies, School of Social Sciences, **JNU**, 24th October 2018.

SEMINARS/CONFERENCES/PANELS ORGANIZED

1. **Panel: Being Religious, Being Scientific: The Dynamics of Science and Religion in the Laboratory, 4S (SOCIETY FOR THE SOCIAL STUDIES OF SCIENCE) Conference, Sydney, Australia** (Aug 29th to 2nd Sept 2018) (co-panelist).
2. **Globalization, Culture and Identity: New Directions** (One day Seminar Organised with Prof. Margaret Abraham (Dept. of Sociology, Hofstra University, New York), and Prof. Mrinalini Sinha (Dept of History, University of Michigan), at the India International Centre, Delhi, 20th August 2018.

Courses Teach at JMC (DU)

1. **Sociology of Religion** (B.A Hons. Sociology)
2. **Religion and Society** (B.A. Prog. Sociology)
3. **Sociological Thinkers II** (B.A. Hons. Sociology)
4. **Social Stratification** (B.A. Hons. Sociology)
5. **Reading, Writing and Reasoning for Sociology** (B. A Hons.Sociology)

Professional Services

Peer Reviewer for **Routledge** (London and New York), **Orient BlackSwan** (India), *Science as Culture* (Journal, Taylor and Francis), *Public Understanding of Science* (Journal, Sage), and *Society and Culture in South Asia* (Journal, Sage).

Dated: 2/12/2019

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