




DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY
LOYOLA HISTORY ASSOCIATION (2024-25)

Memorial Gathering for Raj Gowthaman – Report



சமூக கண்காணிப்பகம்-தமிழ்நாடு
தமிழ்த்துறை – வரலாற்றுத்துறை
இலயோலா கல்லூரி சென்னை-34
இணைந்து நடத்தும்

தலித் எழுத்துலகின் புதிய திசைகாட்டி
பேரா. ராஜ் கௌதமன் அவர்களுக்கு

நினைவேந்தல் கூட்டம்

நினைவுகளைப் பகிர்ந்து கொள்ளும் ஆளுமைகள்

பணி. மாற்கு எழுத்தாளர், சென்னை.
திரு. ரவிக்குமார் பாராளுமன்ற உறுப்பினர், விழுப்புரம்
பேரா. அரங்க மல்லிகா எழுத்தாளர், சென்னை.
பேரா. அ. மார்க்ஸ் எழுத்தாளர், சென்னை.
திரு. டி. எஸ். எஸ். மணி சமூக செயல் பாட்டாளர், சென்னை.
திரு. யாக்கன் எழுத்தாளர், சென்னை.
பேரா. ஸ்டாலின் ராஜாங்கம் எழுத்தாளர், மதுரை.
பேரா. ஞா. குருசாமி எழுத்தாளர், மதுரை.
திரு. சந்தானம் மேலாண்மை இயக்குனர், NCBH, சென்னை.
திரு. பிரளயன் தழைக்க, சென்னை
திரு. சாமுவேல்ராஜ் CPI(M), சென்னை

இடம் - அருப்பே அரங்கம், இலயோலா கல்வியியல் கல்லூரி
நாள் - 4 டிசம்பர், 2024 (புதன்கிழமை)
நேரம் - மாலை 4.00 மணி - தேவீர்
மாலை 4.30 மணி - நிகழ்வு

நிகழ்ச்சி ஒருங்கிணைப்பு
அ.இருதயராஜ்
இயக்குநர், சமூக கண்காணிப்பகம்
தமிழ்நாடு

குறிப்பு - நிகழ்வு நடக்கின்ற நாளில் அவருடைய புத்தகங்கள் அரங்குக்கு
வெளியே விற்பனைக்குக் கிடைக்கும்

Memorial Gathering for Raj Gowthaman – Report

A collaborative memorial gathering was held to honor the life and revolutionary contributions of Prof. Raj Gowthaman, under the joint auspices of the Social Observatory – Tamil Nadu, the Department of Tamil, and the Department of History, Loyola College, Chennai. The event, titled “Memorial Gathering”, reflected not only the remembrance of a powerful literary and intellectual figure but also served as a platform to revisit and reaffirm his transformative ideas on literature, politics, and society.

Venue: Aruppe Hall, Loyola College, *Date:* 4th April 2024 (Thursday) *Time:* 4:00 PM – 4:30 PM

Purpose of the Event

The gathering was conceived as an opportunity to honor the radical intellect and provocative vision of Raj Gowthaman, whose contributions to Tamil literary criticism and social theory continue to shape academic and public discourse. This was a celebration of his unflinching pursuit of truth, and his unapologetic resistance to oppressive institutions and inherited hierarchies.

Speakers and Reflections

A diverse set of speakers — scholars, poets, activists, and cultural critics — shared deeply personal and scholarly reflections on Prof. Gowthaman’s contributions:

1. Pani. Marugu (Writer, Chennai)
2. Dr. Ravikkumar (Writer, Former MP, Vizhupuram)
3. Prof. Aranga Mallika (Writer & Critic, Chennai)
4. Prof. A. Marx (Writer, Chennai)
5. Dr. S.S. Mani (Retired Tamil Professor, Chennai)
6. Mr. Yaadhavaanan (Writer, Chennai)
7. Mr. Stalin Rajangam (Researcher, Madurai)
8. Prof. Guna. Gurusamy (Writer, Madurai)
9. Mr. Chandhanam (Human Rights Activist, NCBH, Chennai)
10. Mr. Piraiyan (Tamil Scholar, Chennai)

11. Mr. Saamuvēlraaj (CPI(M), Chennai)

Each speaker highlighted a different dimension of Prof. Gowthaman's life — from his sharp literary analyses to his radical social philosophies. A recurring theme was his rejection of the traditional family unit as a model of social structure and his call for freer, more egalitarian relationships as the future basis of community.

Organizer's Note

The event was curated by Mr. A. Irudhayaraj, Coordinator, Social Observatory – Tamil Nadu. The gathering emphasized that this was not merely a tribute but a continuation of his intellectual journey, and it encouraged participants to engage with his texts, critique established norms, and carry forward his legacy of fearless thought.

Highlights of the Gathering

The session opened with personal narratives, followed by critical reflections from colleagues, students, and intellectual peers:

- The first speaker, a childhood friend, reminisced about Gowthaman's early years, highlighting his hyperactive curiosity, early rebelliousness, and non-conformist spirit even as a student.
- Later speakers — students and colleagues — shared their experiences with him, shedding light on his intellectual rigor, his mentorship, and his unique ability to challenge even the most accepted norms of society.

One of the central themes that emerged repeatedly was his radical critique of the family institution. Raj Gowthaman viewed the traditional family not as a sanctuary, but as a mechanism of control, a unit that suppressed freedom and individuality. He called for a dismantling of the family structure, envisioning in its place organic, voluntary associations as the new building blocks of society — ones formed through shared values rather than bloodline or obligation.

His Intellectual Legacy

Raj Gowthaman was remembered not just as a scholar, but as a public intellectual, someone who lived his politics and refused intellectual compromise. His work resonated particularly with students and progressive thinkers who saw in him a model of how academic life could be committed, bold, and transformative.

His critiques of caste, patriarchy, familialism, and dominant cultural narratives were echoed with reverence, and his absence felt as a loss to the radical imagination of Tamil society.

Conclusion and Collective Tribute

The event ended with a group photograph of all speakers and attendees — a symbolic gesture of unity and remembrance. This was more than a gathering; it was a collective assertion of thought, a space to remember not just the man but the movement of ideas he stood for.

Raj Gowthaman's vision — of a freer, braver, and more just society — continues to provoke, inspire, and guide. This memorial was both a tribute and a renewal of commitment to critical thinking and social transformation.