

A report on the achievements of Roja Muthiah Research Library and an appeal for support

The Roja Muthiah Research Library (RMRL) was founded in 1994 to preserve, catalogue, and expand the collection of Roja Muthiah Chettiyar, a private collector who put together one of the world's finest private libraries of Tamil publications during his lifetime. Located in Chennai, RMRL currently houses one of the most unique collections of Tamil imprints in South Asia. Some of the publications date from the latter part of the eighteenth century. With a collection of 4,00,000 items, RMRL provides research materials and facilities for research scholars of Tamil studies in a variety of fields spanning the humanities, social sciences, and popular culture.

Some of the major contributions of RMRL to the Society are:

- RMRL provides easy to access reference service for scholars visiting the library at no cost.
- RMRL has been involved in systematic acquisition of Tamil material through field surveys for the last 24 years.
- The Library currently holds 4,00,000 items which includes books, periodicals, ephemeral material, paper manuscripts and palm leaf manuscripts. In addition to Roja Muthiah's collection, the library holds the personal collections of Gift Siromani, Iravatham Mahadevan, AK Ramanujan, Robert Hardgrave, the Rudolphs, Milton Singer, Mu. Arunachalam, Champakalakshmi, Krithika, T. P. Meenakshi Sundaram, Edward Montgomery, Thanjai Prakash, and several others. Publishers such as Kalachuvadu, Kizhakkup pathippakam have been depositing their publications at RMRL. The standardized book and periodical catalogue is available online at www.rmrl.in
- RMRL has microfilmed/digitized 20,00,000 pages of rare early south Indian publications (*Books & periodicals – copyright free*). RMRL is in the process of opening access through internet to all.
- RMRL has started to conserve all rare print material in the Library. Through this, new life shall be given to the books as they can stay for more years.
- RMRL has setup an audio archive to digitize gramophone records, audio spools and audio cassettes. RMRL also is extending support to other individuals and institutions.
- RMRL has digitally restored the notebooks of the mathematical genius Srinavasa Ramanujan. This work and technique used is the first of its kind in the world.
- Through Indus Research Centre, RMRL has made significant contribution in the area of Harappan Studies. It continues to function under the guidance of Thiru Iravatham Mahadevan and Thiru R. Balakrishnan.

- RMRL has imparted training in documentation and preservation to important institutions in South Asia. RMRL is in a unique position that determines standards considering both international and national requirements.
- RMRL is in a unique position that provides a neutral space to articulate the ideas and findings of scholars, researchers and academicians. More than 100 lectures have been organized so far which has been attended by the citizens of Chennai. (*Complete list of lectures/exhibitions/seminars is given in: www.rmrl.in/wordpress/?page_id=147*).

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Support

The support that RMRL received from University of Chicago has ceased as the Memorandum of Understanding between UoC and RMRL has come to an end. RMRL has been operating only through project grants received for its preservation and conservation projects from various funding agencies in India and abroad since 1994. As a token of appreciation for the activities of RMRL, some individuals, corporate, and charitable organizations have donated to RMRL in the last few years.

Appeal

The Library requests philanthropists, corporates, charitable organizations, heritage enthusiast, individuals, scholars and users who believe in the mission of Roja Muthiah Research Library to come forward and extend their support to help RMRL pursue its objectives effectively.

The donations are sought under the following activities

1. Corpus donation for sustenance

2. Donation for activities

- Documentation of publications (*Cataloguing, indexing & listing*)
- Digitization of publications
- Conservation of rare print material
- Reference service
- Research activities

3. Donation for infrastructure

- Compact shelves
- Air conditioners for lecture hall
- Chairs & tables for lecture and reference hall
- Uninterrupted Power Supply
- LED lightings

4. Donation for equipments

- Computers
- Scanners
- Server / Storage devices / Web space

5. Donation for instituting endowments / organizing exhibitions

Contributions are exempted under section 80G of the Income Tax Act.

Interested patrons may kindly contribute by sending a cheque/DD in the name of **ROJA MUTHIAH RESEARCH LIBRARY** to the below address:

Roja Muthiah Research Library Trust
3rd Cross Road, Central Polytechnic Campus
Taramani, Chennai 600 113.

If you wish to make a wire transfer please contact us @:

Telephone: 044-2254 2551/52 **E-Mail ID:** rmrl@dataone.in