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## IN CONVERSATION WITH MANU .S. PILLAI

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The Department of History, Loyola College (Autonomous), Chennai, organised a conversation with an eminent historian and author, Shri Manu S Pillai. The Head of the Department, Dr D. Anuradha, introduced him in her welcome address. Following the Head's welcome address, Rev. Dr A. Thomas S J. Principal, Loyola College (Autonomous), Chennai, felicitated Mr Pillai.

Dr Biju Joseph P.J and Professor Ahilan Joe Woutres moderated the session with participation from the students. Mr Pillai took to the podium with an insightful discussion on his first book, *The Ivory Throne*, which he started to write when he was just 18 years old. This book attempts to clarify doubts about the history of Sethu Lakshmi Bai. The discussion then proceeded to his second book, *Rebel Sultans: The Deccan from Khilji to Shivaji*, which offers an amalgamation of Indian and Persian culture. The third book, *The Courtesan, The Mahatma and the Italian Brahmin - Tales from Indian History*, portrays a vivid picture of interactions between Robert de Nobili and the Indians. It also touches on the daring questions raised by Mahatma and Jyoti Rao Phule.

The event then proceeded to a Q&A session, where students participated eagerly. Questions were on marginalisation, Victorian influence on India, the elevation of royalty to the position of God, and changes in customs. The session then ended with the vote of thanks delivered by Dr Biju Joseph.