



## THE NATIONAL TRUST – SRI LANKA

DR ROLAND SILVA MEMORIAL LECTURE - THURSDAY 27TH JANUARY 2022 AT 6.00 PM

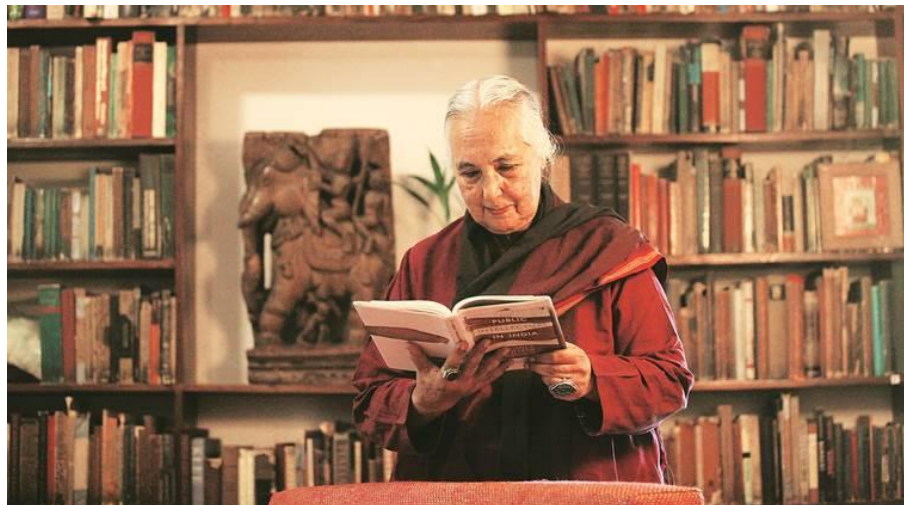
### **“The History of the Museum in India”**

**By Prof. Romila Thapar**

The 141<sup>st</sup> Session of the Monthly Lecture Series of The National Trust will be delivered online on Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> January 2022 at 6.00 pm. By Prof. Romila Thapar.

**Link to lecture:** <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85174934993>

"The first half of the lecture summarizes the concept of the museum. It discusses how the institution was introduced to India and the gradual evolution of the concept from private collections to public displays of artifacts owned by the state in specially constructed places. My example will be the history of the museum in India, but my assumption is that this history, as can be observed in India, would probably apply to most countries that were once colonies. The second half of the lecture presents views about the functions and purposes of the public museums in the last decades. Has the museum, now that it is located in an independent state, taken a different form? How can the museum be made into a crucial institution in both defining heritage and in exploring knowledge? This is one institution in which the historian and the art-historian have to work closely together, or for that matter even the historian and the professional specialist in whatever discipline the museum is connected to."



**Prof. Romila Thapar** who was born on 30 November 1931, is an Indian historian. Her principal area of study is ancient India, a field in which she is pre-eminent. Prof. Thapar is a Professor of Ancient History, Emerita, at the Jawaharlal Nehru University in New Delhi.

Prof. Thapar's special contribution is the use of social-historical methods to understand change in the mid-first millennium BCE in northern India. As lineage-based Indo-Aryan pastoral groups moved into the Gangetic Plain, they created rudimentary forms of caste-based states. The epics *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata*, in her analysis, offer vignettes of how these groups and others negotiated new, more complex, forms of loyalty in which stratification, purity, and exclusion played a greater if still fluid role.

The author of *From Lineage to State, Asoka and the Decline of the Mauryas, Early India: From Origins to AD 1300*, and the popular *History of India, Part I*, Prof. Thapar has received honorary doctorates from the University of Chicago, the University of Oxford, Institute National des Langues et Civilisations Orientales, Paris, the University of Edinburgh, the University of Calcutta, the University of Hyderabad, Brown University, and the University of Pretoria.

Prof. Thapar is an Honorary Fellow of the School of Oriental and African Studies, London, where she also received her Ph.D. in 1958, and a Foreign Honorary Member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. In 2008, Prof. Romila Thapar shared the US Library of Congress's Kluge Prize, for Lifetime Achievement in the Humanities and Social Sciences.

**The National Trust – Sri Lanka conducts monthly lectures on the last Thursday of each month. The lectures are open to the members and the public. The HNB Sustainability Foundation is the principal sponsor of the events of the National Trust – Sri Lanka.**

**Further information can be obtained from the Trust Office [Tel 2682730](tel:2682730) / [0777397403](tel:0777397403)**