



THE NATIONAL TRUST – SRI LANKA LECTURE ON
THURSDAY 26TH NOVEMBER 2020

“THE GREAT LIBRARY TRADITION AS A REPOSITORY OF KNOWLEDGE”

By Deshamanya Vidya Jyothi Ashley De Vos

The 130th Session of the Monthly Lecture Series of the National Trust - Sri Lanka will be delivered Online at 6.30pm on Thursday 26th November 2020.

Link to lecture

<https://bit.ly/36FLC8w>

From time immemorial man has documented what he saw, observed, drawn on the wall of the caves and used the drawings of what he saw for ritualistic purposes and in the carvings on the instruments he carried around when they went out to hunt. This changed when man learnt to write. The memorized word was now committed in writing. First clay tablets were used, inscriptions on stone, and later on specially prepared leaves, on animal skins, on parchment, on papyrus, on ola, on palmyrah, on bamboo, on cloth, on silk, collected into grouping called manuscripts. After the Chinese invented paper, a limited number of books appeared and this led to a restricted spread of knowledge. Books were still valuable as they were mostly written and illustrated by hand. It was the printing press that was responsible for the extension and ultimate spread of knowledge across the continents. Books were stolen, acquired, read, discussed, criticized, accepted or rejected and much of this material ended up in institutions called libraries. This is in fact where our story begins. Unfortunately or fortunately we have now come to the final stage of this spread of knowledge.

Deciphering correct and fake knowledge is becoming impossible, there is so much out there, it has become a complex task. Will we ever know what is correct and will knowledge as we know it cease to exist? Will man eventually vegetate to a mass of matter that will only indulge to a pre-programmed bidding?



Ashley de Vos is the Senior Vice President of The National Trust – Trained as an Architect, a Landscape Architect, in Conservation and Heritage Management and in Urban renewal. Fellow of the Sri Lanka Institute of Architects and Member of the Royal Institute of British Architects for 46 years.

He was a full time Faculty at the University of Moratuwa, today serves as Visiting Faculty & Examiner in the Departments of Architecture, Design, Urban design and Landscape Architecture. He has also been a Visiting Faculty at the International Centre for Conservation, Rome (ICCROM) – Italy, University of Baghdad – Iraq, East West Encounter, East West Centre, University of Honolulu, Institute of South Asian Studies, University of Amsterdam – Netherlands, Lahore College of Arts, Lahore – Pakistan, The National Centre for Conservation, Restoration & Museum Sciences, Havana – Cuba and the Asia-Pacific Cultural Centre for UNESCO (ACCU) & Nara National Research Institute for Cultural Properties, Nara – Japan.

He has won the following awards ‘South Asian Architect of the Year’ International Award (1996, 1998 & 2004). Seven Design Awards from the SLIA and a Life time Achievement Award from the Sri Lanka Institute of Architects (2009). Two PATA Heritage Awards (Dutch Period Museum Project 1980, Jetavana Project 1982). Winner of the National e-Swabhimani Award for the animated film, a “Day in the life of the Jetavana Monastery at Anuradhapura” (2010).

Arch. De Vos was the Chairman, required to the report on a Tourism Master Plan for the East Coast, Sri Lanka presented to Hon Milinda Moragoda, Minister of Tourism. Is the current President, Royal Asiatic Society of Sri Lanka, Past President of ICOMOS (Sri Lanka), and Wildlife & Nature Protection Society of Sri Lanka, was Director Conservation of the UNESCO/CCF Jetavana Stupa and Monastery Project and Director General of the Galle Tsunami Rehabilitation Project after the 2004 Tsunami, is a Member of the Advisory Board of the Department of Archaeology, was a Member of the Galle Heritage Trust, Central Environment Authority, Governing Council, University of Moratuwa, Katubedde and Board of Governors of the Arthur C. Clarke Centre, Katubedde.

He has also been Elevated to National Status, as Vidya Jyothi, (Light of Science 1994), Desamanya, (Pride of the Nation, 2006), in recognition of the continued contribution to Architecture, Conservation and protection of the Environment. The

Jathika Uruma Prasada Pranama (Protector of Cultural Heritage of Sri Lanka, 2014) in recognition of continued efforts to protect the Cultural Heritage of Sri Lanka.

Since 1976 – 1990, he has been Partner / Director, Design Group Five International and from 1990 to date in practice as Ashley de Vos Consultants.

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 / 0778081214