

# ICH 2020/21

## **Retrospection for Future Perspectives**

The future can be seen as directed and defined by our past. Sri Lanka with its rich history steeped in diverse socio-cultural traditions and shaped by its various religions, has always looked to its traditions and cultures to fashion its response to the challenges of the future. As the University of Kelaniya (founded on a rich history and enriched with the “**Vidyālaṅkāra Tradition**”) celebrates 60 years of excellence in higher education, the inspiration and perspective for a future that ushers in the challenges of being global, technological, ecological and multicultural is sought through retrospection. Such a prospective will need to be critical as well as celebratory in its perspective.

While history can be seen as repetitive, the future can be shaped and redefined to suit our needs as new knowledge/s are defined and rediscovered through the lessons learnt in history so that the inequalities, tensions, crises, and conflicts of the past will not be repeated.

While the prospect of history is thus highlighted in terms of its influence on the future, it is also essential to refashion epistemological and ontological truths relevant to the Humanities through retrospection. Individual and collective reflection on the multifarious, multifaceted methodologies and practices used in the Humanities as well as the growing interdisciplinarity and multidisciplinary approaches in the field is also of crucial importance in formulating fresh perspectives for humanities subjects and their future. Consequently, while the Vidyālaṅkāra tradition and its influence on humanities subjects is vital when looking at the various traditions practiced in Sri Lanka, it is of equal importance to look into the past for other traditions and influences so as to map the multicultural influences from the East and the West that allow us to form innovative perspectives for a future that is enriched by our pasts.

Since the past can thus redefine our future perspectives, **ICH 2020 of the Faculty of Humanities**, University of Kelaniya invites you to look into our individual and collective pasts to navigate the challenges of our future/s through “**Retrospection for Future Perspectives**”. We welcome **extended abstracts of 1500-2000 words** for papers/ presentations spanning the following tracts and other related disciplinary and interdisciplinary knowledge inquiries.

1. The “Vidyalankara Tradition”
2. Sinhala Language
3. Literary and Theoretical Criticism
4. Eastern and Western Languages and Traditions
5. Linguistics
6. Vastu Vidhya
7. Yoga/Ayurveda – life style
8. Astrology and Cultural Norms/Practices
9. Buddhism/Hinduism and Christian Religious Traditions
10. Fine Arts
11. Politics and Ethics

*The presenters are strongly advised to refer to the elaborations of the above tracts/research areas provided below before submitting their abstracts. This will ensure that the abstracts conform to the expected aims/objectives of each tract/research area. Please note that any abstract which fails to do so will be rejected.*

*You may access the website and the elaborations by following the link given below:*

### **1. The “Vidyalankara” tradition**

What is the “Vidyalankara” tradition? What are its distinctive features? What is the present usage of the “Vidyalankara” tradition? Why should the “Vidyalankara” tradition be studied? What are the challenges for the usage of the “Vidyalankara” tradition in future and how to address them?

What are the special features of the “Vidyalankara” tradition in relation to Sinhala language? Is not a “Vidyalankara” tradition of Sinhala language needed? Why is it important to study and conduct research on the grammar systems of the “Vidyalankara” school of thought?

What is the opinion of the “Vidyalankara” tradition on the classical grammar text, the “Sidath Sagarawa” and related principles?

What is the role of the Buddhist monk? What is the contribution of the Buddhist monks for politics in the past? What are the reasons and incidents that promoted such contributions? What are the distinctive features of the ideological concerns of Buddhist monks of the “Vidyalankara” tradition? What should be the nature of politics related to Buddhist monks in future?

## **2. Sinhala language**

What are the issues related to the use of Sinhala language at present? What is the impact of other languages on Sinhala language?

What are the new research studies on Sinhala language? What are the future challenges related to Sinhala language?

What is the scientific methodology of transforming the foreign phonetic systems to Sinhala language? What were such methods that existed in the past? How should such methods be related to the present?

## **3. Literary and Theoretical criticism**

Can observations without criticism be astute? What are the origins of literary criticism in the east and in the west? What kind of impact did they have on Sinhala literary criticism? What is the nature of the literary criticism of the “Vidyalankara” tradition? What is the contribution of the “Vidyalankara” school of thought to Sinhala literary criticism?

What is the impact of texts such as “Natya Shasthraya” (2<sup>nd</sup> Century AD) on the Sinhala theatre? Are the principles of “Natya Shasthraya” still being practiced? If so, to what extent? What are the changes as well as new trends? What is the impact of the eastern principles of theatre on modern media such as cinema? What are the texts which have influenced the gradual development of the plot, context, events and characterization?

What are the future changes and the present usage of the ancient poetry? How are the principles of poetry that originated in the past will be used in the future? What are the new concepts and modern literary principles of literary genres such as poetry, short stories and novels? What are the factors that have led to the creation of such principles?

What are the original texts which have contributed to the gradual development of eastern and western thinking patterns? What are the present as well as future uses of those thinking patterns?

How did the eastern and western thinking patterns develop?

How did the symbols related to present visual media gradually develop? What are the factors that contributed to that development? What are the implications of principles presented by critics such as Plato, Aristophanes and Aristotle on literary criticism? How have their principles contributed to visual media such as western cinema? Should not the usage of “Panchathanthraya”, “Jataka” stories, Fables of Aesop and Japanese Sen stories in the modern print and electronic media be investigated?

#### **4. Eastern and Western languages and traditions**

What are the new trends in Classical languages such as Sanskrit and Pali? What are the specific features of Sanskrit language which should be considered in its computerization? What are the scientific traditions and ways explored in Sanskrit language? What is the mechanism behind the formation of Sanskrit and Pali grammar structures? Can software be developed to facilitate these methods?

Can ancient Sri Lankan teaching methods be used in teaching and learning modern languages? What are the new developments in the teaching methodology of eastern and western languages? What are the related research studies?

What are the distinctive features of Sri Lankan English? What are the present and future challenges of learning and teaching English and foreign languages? What are the proposed solutions?

## **5. Linguistics**

What are the new trends related to linguistics after 1970s? Has the usage of Sinhala been influenced by modern linguistic research? How have they contributed to the gradual development of Sinhala language? What are the new linguistic principles and concepts developed by modern linguists that affect Sinhala language?

What are the post 1973 developments in translation studies? How can the ancient Dhamma rhetoric with its audio-visual renditions be used in the modern world? To what extent has machine translation been used by the modern scholars? What are the challenges of new translation methodologies?

## **6. Vastu Vidhya**

What are the research studies on Sri Lankan ancient creations and their structures? What principles have influenced these ancient works? How did those principles originate and gradually develop? What is the nature of ancient technological and engineering skills prevalent in Sri Lanka? What are the practical, scientific and environmentally friendly aspects of these creations? How can they be used at present and in future?

## **7. Yoga/Ayurveda – life style**

What are the ancient exercises practiced to retain the well-being? What are the ancient practices of daily routine, food ritual and food consumption? What is their scientific basis? What are the appropriate times and proportions in consuming food? What are the appropriate sleeping postures? What is the appropriate duration for restful sleep? Are the specific behavior patterns in relation to seasons? What is the practical and scientific basis for these? What are the methods of food preservation? What is the practical and scientific relevance of these practices in today's world? What are the plants that affect our health? Are there appropriate and inappropriate plants to be grown in home compounds? What are the reasons and the basis for these?

## **8. Astrology and Cultural norms/Practices**

Is astrology a myth or an occult science? What are the similarities and differences between astrology and astronomy? What is revealed by these sciences? Can they predict climate disruptions? Has the ancient world been ruled by astronomical calculations? What impact did astrology have on ancient life style? How can we use astrological theories and principles in today's world?

What were the astrological and cultural norms that prevailed in Sri Lankan society? What were their origins? What were their therapeutic and psychological effects? What is the value of norms as indigenous psychological treatment? What are the socio-cultural values associated with norms? What is their usage in psychological treatment in future?

## **9. Buddhism/Hinduism and Christian religious traditions**

What are the practical solutions offered by various religious practices for ethnic conflict, suicide, mental health issues, and depression? What teachings promote psycho-social and spiritual well-being? What are the practical teachings offered by these philosophies to achieve reconciliation and social justice?

## **10. Fine Arts**

What are the unique features of traditional dance? Can they be reformed to suit the future? What were the specific characteristics of the origins of traditional dance and music? To what extent can they be adapted to suit the present and future of the fine arts? How can traditional music and rhythms be appropriated to suit the future needs?

What are the developments related to the theatre that emerged from folk tradition? What were the dramatic qualities of these productions? What are the future directions of local theatre? What are the challenges in using ancient dramatic techniques in the future?

What are the unique features of art, sculpture and carvings of Sri Lanka? What were the western influences that affected those fields? What are the present uses of art, sculpture and carvings?

How can we develop a tradition of art, sculpture and carvings which promote a unique Sri Lankan identity?

## 11. Politics and Ethics

What were the soft skills practiced in ancient Sri Lankan society? What were their values and practicalities? How can they be used for today and tomorrow? What are the specific qualities of our cultural ethics as opposed to western concepts? What are the soft skills in our society relevant for a scholar? To what extent do they contribute to the development of a future scholar?

## Guidelines for Writing Extended Abstracts

- The content should be presented under the following subheadings:
  - Introduction (should include research problem, objectives, significance and / or justification)
  - Methodology (research design/ data collection and analysis methods)
  - Results
  - Discussion
  - Recommendations/ Implications
- The extended abstract can contain figures, tables and images that are labelled properly
- You may include any footnotes where necessary
- The body should include in-text citation where necessary and the reference list should follow the main body
- Referencing style: (MLA - eighth edition <https://www.mla.org/MLA-Style/What-s-New-in-the-Eighth-Edition> )
- Length of the abstract (excluding references): 1500 – 2000 words
- Please ensure that your abstract is written in clear, error-free academic English or Sinhala. Any terminology specific to your field of study should be defined briefly.
- Your title should reflect the focus of your research. It should not be a general one based on the broad field of study. For example, "Women in religion" is very general, while the following -- "The Representation of Women Characters in Buddhist Jataka Tales" is more specific, and reflects the focus of your research.
- **If your extended abstract is written in Sinhala** you are requested to provide an abstract written in English of not more than 300 words.

## Format

- Page size - A4
- Font type - Times New Roman,
- Font size - **Heading** - 14 (bold, title case)      **Subheadings** - 12 (bold)      Body and references - 12
- Spacing - 1.5
- Margin - 1.5 cm
- On a **separate sheet** include the following  
    Include your name    Author<sup>1</sup> (name, affiliation)  
                                    Co-author<sup>2</sup> (name, affiliation)  
                                    Co- author<sup>3</sup> (name, affiliation)
- Include address, email and phone numbers and a short bio (about 100 words; academic, professional and research background) of author <sup>1</sup>

All abstracts should be **submitted online** (both in pdf and word formats) using the portal available on the website.

For more details contact:

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**The deadline for submitting abstracts – 3<sup>rd</sup> of April 2020**