



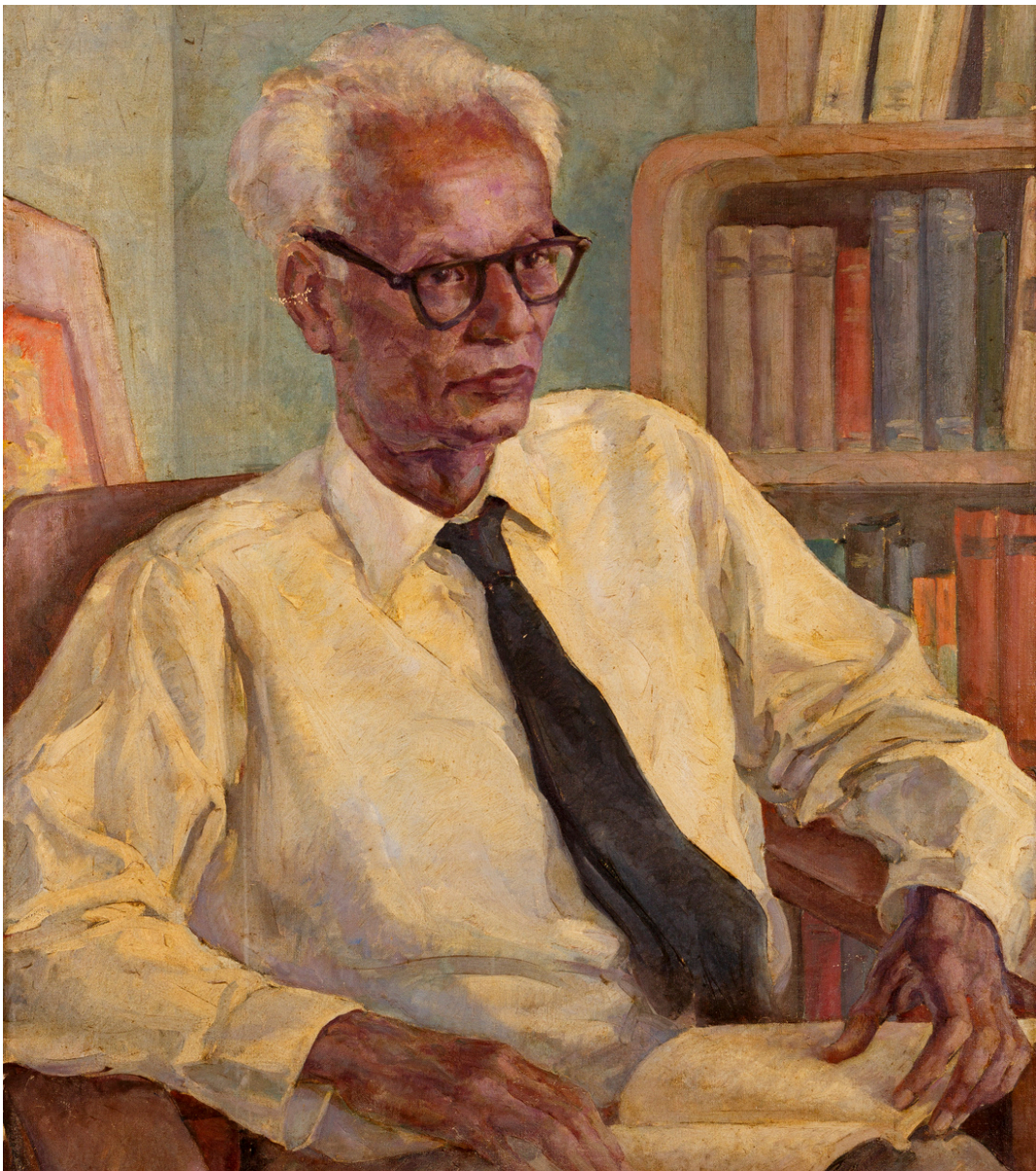
INTERNATIONAL  
CENTRE FOR  
ETHNIC STUDIES



## THE MAKING OF A MODERN SRI LANKAN MIND

THE LIFE AND WORK OF  
MARTIN WICKRAMASINGHE (1890-1976)

A PRESENTATION BY **UDITHA DEVAPRIYA**



6 February 2026

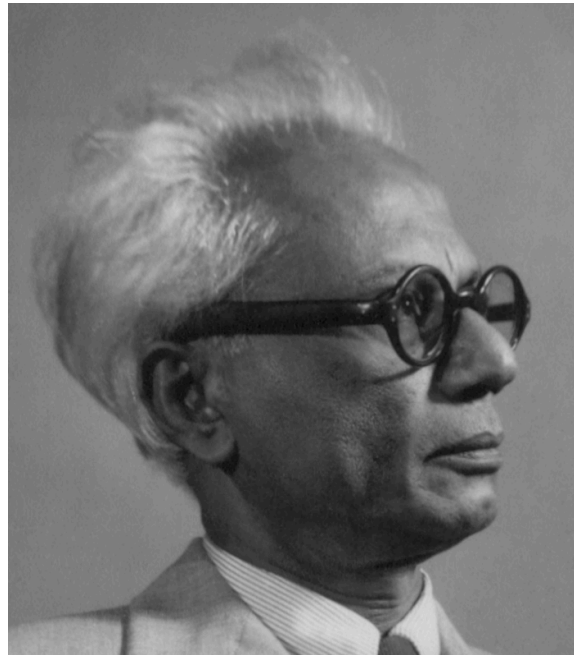
International Centre for Ethnic Studies Colombo

05.00 pm

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Author, journalist, thinker, and critic, Martin Wickramasinghe (1890 - 1976) was one of Sri Lanka's most renowned writers and cultural and literary figures. His body of work includes 13 novels and numerous short stories, as well as essays on art, culture, history, literature, politics, and anthropology.

Deeply bilingual and bicultural, Wickramasinghe explored various facets of indigenous art, culture, and literature in his essays. These display a fervent interest in subjects like anthropology and comparative literature and religion. Eventually, they made him an important thinker in Sri Lanka and South Asia.

While he was contemporary of the leading modernist artistes and intellectuals in his country, Wickramasinghe differed from many of them in his background, his education, and his outlook. Despite lacking formal schooling, he became the preeminent public intellectual in Sri Lanka.

**The lecture focuses on Martin Wickramasinghe's contributions as a novelist, critic, journalist, and public intellectual. Setting him against the backdrop of his time and place, it seeks to explore his life, work, and thought.**

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**05.00 pm**

Welcome Address

**05.05 pm**

Opening Remarks by Ambassador (Retd.) Ravinatha Aryasinha

**05.10 pm**

Presentation by Uditha Devapriya

**05.50 pm**

Discussion and Q & A

**06.25 pm**

Closing Remarks by Ms Priyanthi Fernando

**06.30 pm**

Vote of Thanks

**06.35 pm**

Refreshments and Networking

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Uditha Devapriya is an independent researcher, author, columnist, and analyst from Sri Lanka, whose work spans international relations, geopolitics, art and culture, history, anthropology, and politics.

From 2022 to 2025, he was Chief International Relations Analyst at Factum, a foreign policy think tank. In 2024, he was part of a delegation on the US International Visitor Leadership Program. In 2025, he was a Resident Fellow at the Kautilya School of Public Policy in Hyderabad, India.

In 2021, he served as research coordinator for a study of the Sri Lankan painter George Keyt (**George Keyt: The Absence of a Desired Image**, SinhaRaja Tammita-Delgoda). This was published in 2024.

Since 2023, Devapriya has authored several books on Sri Lankan figures and institutions. He is presently working on a study of the preeminent Sri Lankan novelist and critic Martin Wickramasinghe.

6 February 2026

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05.00 p.m