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Sri Lanka Roundtable 2026

Ghent University, Belgium
5-7 May

Participants may upload their files (papers, slides, publications) on this [online repository](#). Details on the SLRT may also be found on the project website of SovereignPerformance: <https://www.sovereignperformance.be/events/slrt-2026/>.

For last-minute **emergencies or contingencies** during the round table, please call or message Francesco Colin (+39 3477718683) or Demet (+41 772593273)

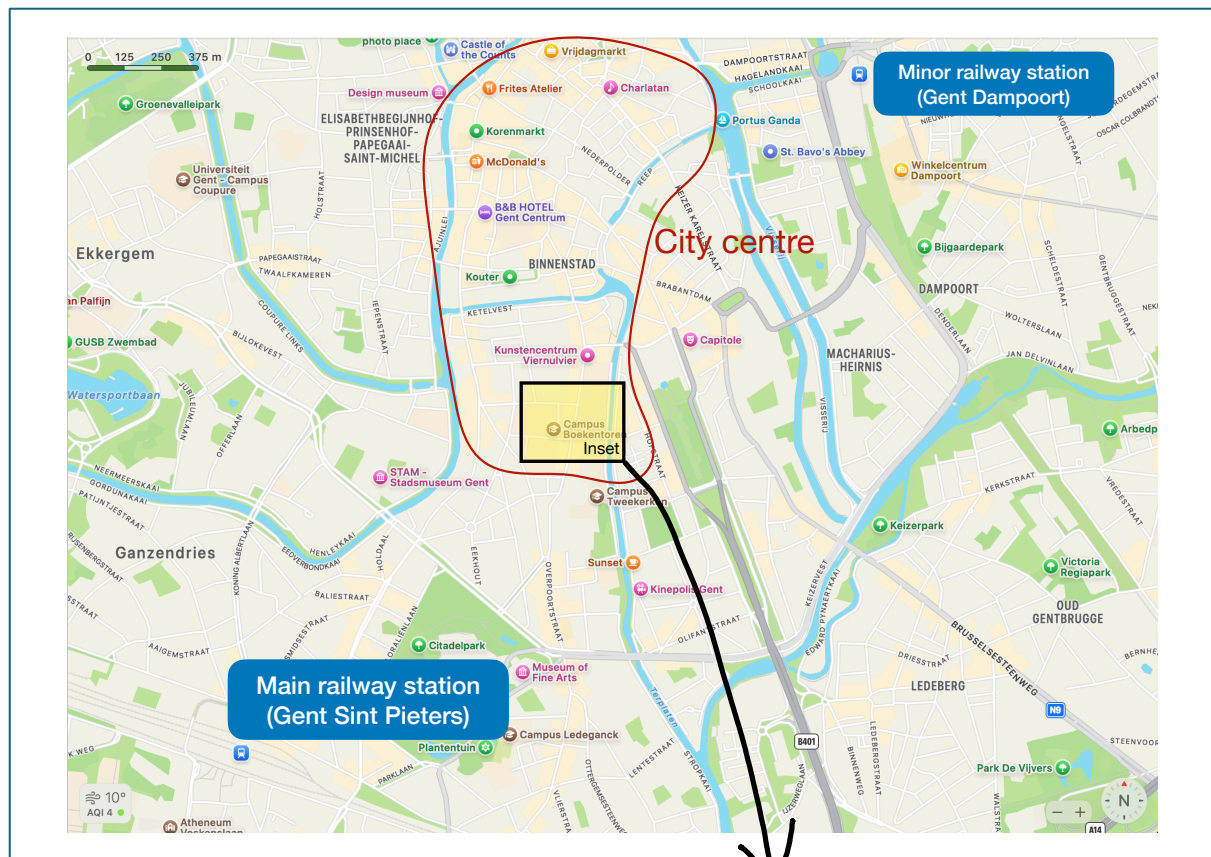
The Roundtable will take place on university premises in the historical heart of Ghent.

- **Book Tower:** Rozier 9, Ghent
- **Vandenhoven Paviljoen,** Rozier 1, Ghent
- All other rooms are at **UFO T2:** Sint Pieter Nieuwstraat 41, Ghent

Please see maps on next page.

There are plenty of hotels in the city centre, close to our venue. Ghent is a popular tourist destination, so it is worth not leaving hotel bookings to the last minute. We recommend using more ethical websites such as Trip.com where possible and avoiding those on the [BDS list](#).

The city centre is a 10-minute tram ride (or a 30-minute walk) from the main railway station (Gent Sint Pieters), with regular connections to Brussels (30 min) and Antwerp (40 min). The closest major airport is Brussels (Zaventem), but given the high-speed train connections, Paris (Charles de Gaulle) would also be an option.



Tuesday 5 May

Time	Room	Session
1730 – 1930	Auditorium A (Cloquet) Floor minus 3 of Technicum T2.	Sulochana Peiris – “Pettah” film screening, followed by Q+A (curated Jayanthi)

Wednesday 6 May

Time	Room	Session
0845	Book tower (foyer on 1 st floor)	Coffee
0915 - 0930	Book tower (top floor)	Welcome Bart (UGhent) and Stefan (KAS)
0930 – 1030	Book tower (top floor)	Session 1a: Historical narratives, identities and arts (chair Bart) - Kaitlin Emmanuel – Histories disinterred: archive art and artistic collaboration in wartime Sri Lanka - Mahendran Thiruvargan – Beyond the Tamil nation: Muslim writers on Sri Lanka’s civil war - Justin Henry – The application of computer vision in interpreting the Sigiri graffiti
1030 – 1045	Book tower (top floor)	Session 1b: Georg Frerks – Book proposal (edited volume) and invitation to contribute
1045 – 1115	Book tower (foyer 1 st floor)	Coffee
1115 – 1230	Book tower (top floor)	Session 2a: Legal governance (chair Dinesha) - Anupama Goel & Neha Tripathi – Rule of law pathways in SL, India, Pakistan - Senuri de Silva – Administrative law as proxy ICL mechanism - Pathujan Srinagaruban – Structural flaws in SL’s post-2009 truth commissions
	Vandenhove Paviljoen	Session 2b: Labour markets: shifts and continuities (chair Jayanthi) - Mayalagu Pavithra & Mahdia Fatima Rizvi – Women plantation workers & colonial continuities - Yathukulan Yogarajah – Tamil migrant labour force in UK
1130 – 1245	John Vincke room	Session 2c: Colonial legacies and continuities (chair Deborah) - Senel Wanniarachchi – Colonial loot & British museums - Sulakshana de Mel – Influence of Dutch VOC at the Sinhala and Tamil NY table - Cherry Briggs - The wet and the dry: global connections and the construction of Sri Lanka’s climate, 1800-1953
1245 – 1345	Old Machine Hall, Floor minus 3, T2	Lunch
1345 – 1500	John Vincke room	Session 3a: Research methodologies and practices (chair Chulani) - Sujatha Meegama – Ethics of ivory research - Malin Akebo & Nilanjana Premaratna – Mapping peace through participatory methods - Shavena Vigneswara Kumar – Reflexivity, positionality and power in research on Tamil diaspora community organising

	Vandenhove Paviljoen	Session 3b: From state formation to global advocacy: politics of the Sri Lankan conflict (chair Bart) • Sunil Bastian – State formation, conflict & politics • Lola Guyot - "From Sri Lanka to the international arena: the moral geography of the Tamil cause" • Thamil Venthan Ananthavinayagan – Zionism and Theravada Buddhism: two sides of the same coin
	Room 1.12	Session 3c: Ecology, land and marginality (chair Thiruni) • Minuri Perera – ‘Green-grabbing’ and marginalised communities in post-war Sri Lanka • Aditi Nidhi – Environmental constitutionalism & climate litigation • Deborah Johnson & Ruth Young – Coastal archaeology of everyday life and livelihoods: centring alternative approaches and practices
1500 – 1530	Old Machine Hall, Floor minus 3, T2	Coffee
1530 – 1645	John Vincke room	Session 4a: Re-examining protest and oppression (chair Jayanthi) • Lihini Ratwatte - Analysis of gendered roles in SL's people-led protest movements • Chiranthi Senanayake - Betrayal of the modern Kuveni: a transnational feminist and feminist justice study on the multi-dimensional oppression of Adivasi women in Sri Lanka • Prateek Srivastava - Precarities and possibilities? Queer politics at the crux of Sri Lanka's economic crisis
	Vandenhove Paviljoen	Session 4b: Identity formation and contestations (chair Deborah) • Dennis McGilvray – Moors and Marakkayars: Muslim cousins across the Palk Strait. • Mohamed Faslan – Identity formation among Muslims in Kattankudy
1800	Old Machine Hall, Floor minus 3, T2	Dinner

Thursday: 7 May

Time	Room	Session
0915 – 1030	Room 2.12	Session 5a: Roundtable on imagination after violence: cultural production and contestation in post-war Sri Lanka (chair Bart) Organisers: • Thilini Meegaswatta • Stefan Horlacher Panelists: • Lars Waldorf • Nilanjana Premaratna • Mahendran Thiruvarangan
	Room 1.12	Session 5b Gender, law, and the postwar political economy in Sri Lanka (chair Deborah) • Jayanthi Lingham – Gender and the post-war ethnonationalist state • Aparna Eswaran – Gendered analysis of post-conflict policies of reconciliation and rehabilitation

0915 – 1030	Room -3.2 (floor minus 3)	Paper workshop 1, part 1 (chair Roshni) closed session - Tara Quinn – Women’s political participation & quotas - Chulani Kodikara – ‘Where to from here children?’: Appearing the disappeared in the <i>Aragalaya/Porattam/</i> Struggle of 2022 - Dinesha Samararatne – Rule of Law and the (Arbitrary) State
	Room -3.4 (floor minus 3)	Paper workshop 2, part 1 (chair Andrea) closed session - Samanmali Alujjage Don – Menstrual management in plantations - Katharine Adeney & Wilfried Swenden – Representation, symbolism, nationalism - Pouwel van Schooten – Enslavement, landownership, 18th-century Galle
1030 – 1100	Old Machine Hall, -3 in T2	Coffee
1100 – 1215	Room 2.12	Session 6a: Multi-scalar development and everyday resistance in Sri Lanka (Chair Jayanthi) - Shibanee Sivanayagam – The 1972 conjuncture: the formation of palmyrah toddy cooperatives in the north of Sri Lanka - Kanchana N. Ruwanpura – Debt, distress and defiance: (feminist) political economy perspectives - Thiruni Kelegama – Sovereignty by exception: global China and infrastructure in post-war Sri Lanka
	Room 1.12	Session 6b: Negotiating faiths, laws, and sacred geography in Sri Lanka (Chair Georg) - Mahinda Deegalle – Socialist Buddhist monks of Sri Lanka - Bruno M. Shirley – Polonnaruwa historiography
1100 – 1215	Room -3.2 (floor minus 3)	Paper workshop 1, part 2 (chair Roshni) closed session - Anukuvi Thavarasa - A Commemorative reader: rethinking collective memory through Tamil commemorative practices in post-war Sri Lanka - Dominic Esler – Caste, church & state in colonial Sri Lanka - Roshni Kapur – Caste politics in Jaffna
	Room -3.4 (floor minus 3)	Paper workshop 2, part 2 (chair Andrea) closed session - Andrea Novellis – Youth peacebuilding in “victor’s peace” - Alli Spring – PeaceTech & everyday life
1215 – 1330	Old Machine Hall, -3 in T2	Lunch
1330 – 1445	Vandenhove Paviljoen	Session 7a: Strategic island: Sri Lanka in the regional and global order (chair Thiruni) - Yan He – The impact of the Indo-Pacific strategy on China-Sri Lanka security relations - Muttukrishna Sarvananthan – Tapping Tamil Nadu’s economic dynamism for development in SL: a regional economic perspective - Tabita Rosendaal – Chinese financing in Sri Lanka
	Book tower	Session 7b: Politics, publics, and political repertoires in contemporary Sri Lanka (chair Georg) - Samal Hemachandra – Intellectuals and their Aragalaya/Porattam - Jonathan Goodhand – Responses to Sri Lanka’s post-war ‘drugs crisis’

		Bart Klem – Party symbols as a multi-valent political repertoire
1445 – 1515	Book tower (foyer 1 st floor)	Coffee
1515 – 1630	Book tower	Session 8: Protest and political shifts (Jayanthi) - Ananda Abeysekara – Tradition, corruption discourse & Aragalaya - Lars Waldorf & Nilanjana Premaratna - The politics of hope and disappointment in post-protest Sri Lanka - Ramindu Perera - Interpreting Sri Lanka's recent political shift: the rise of NPP as left-wing populism • Close (Jayanthi and Bart)