

International Political Economy and the Middle East

Wednesday, 15 June 2022 09:00 (1h 30m)

Given the role of oil as the quintessential strategic commodity and the wars in Syria, Yemen, and Libya, IR tends to analyse the Middle East from a security perspective. An unfortunate consequence is the relative dearth of literature approaching the region from an International Political Economy (IPE) angle. Rentier state theory remains the main conceptual contribution Middle East politics scholars have made to IPE, although this is beginning to change. Insofar as it suggests that oil wealth reduces economic, political and social pressures for democracy, the rentier state concept has contributed to the image of the Middle East as an 'exceptional' region.

This roundtable encourages discussion among IPE scholars working on the Middle East. It is organised around a special issue in "Globalizations", which approaches the Middle Eastern state from international political economy perspective. Rather than focusing on the states' 'homemade' deficiencies, contributors seek to remove the exceptionalist mantle that often veils analyses of Middle Eastern states.

The panellists will reflect on how their teaching and research on the Middle East contributes to key themes in broader IPE: racialised and gendered logics of global capitalism (Tilley & Shilliam 2018), understanding capitalist development beyond the dominant model characterised by 'Eurocentric diffusionism' (Anievas & Nişancıoğlu 2015; Tansel 2017), and the role of the periphery in global knowledge production (Helleiner & Rosales 2017). Finally, this roundtable also provides the opportunity of reassessing and possibly contesting conceptual binaries that have often shaped IPE analysis, including between rent and profit, between security and accumulation, between formal and informal, between legal and illegal, and ultimately the foundational one between inside and outside of a state.

Membership

Track Classification: International Political Economy Working Group