

New Perspectives on Nineteenth-Century International Order

Friday, 7 June 2024 15:00 (1h 30m)

This panel brings together scholars working on nineteenth-century international relations from the broad perspective of practice-turn and relational approaches. A common theme is the rejection of the traditional narrative about the expansion of an originally European system or society of sovereign states, which fails to comprehend the complexity of global international relations in this period. It ignores the variety of political forms; flattens or obscures structures of hierarchy; and underestimates the agency of certain actors, especially non-European ones. This narrative has already been subjected to much criticism in recent IR scholarship, which has shown that it is essential to revisit what have often been seen as the boundaries or liminal spaces of the society of states, and also that new empirical methods – such as the interpretive analysis of international practices, or the network analysis of social relations – are needed to reveal the complexity inherent here and make it intelligible. The panel explores these approaches in a variety of contexts, looking at issues like the management of public health and sanitation, sites for interaction such as international organizations, practices like colonial litigation or treaty-making, and different regional spaces including India and the Pacific Ocean.

Track Classification: Historical Sociology and International Relations Working Group