Iran and sanctions

Tuesday, 5 March – 5pm
Investcorp Auditorium, St Antony’s College

Zep Kalb (UCLA)
James Landale (BBC)

Chair: Yassamine Mather (Oxford University)

The US has partly justified the re-imposition of sanctions on Iran with reference to the rising level of protests in the country. The US administration and the several Iranian exile groups it supports claim that social unrest is or can quickly become part of a broader movement demanding democracy in Iran. Tougher sanctions are believed to lead to a cascade in protest intensity, thus increasing the likelihood of regime change without the need for direct military intervention.

Zep Kalb using novel data on contentious politics in Iran, will question this theory. Focusing on labour, he will argue that protests should be seen as an emerging and increasingly common bargaining strategy between state and society. James Landale will talk about his impressions from a recent visit to Iran, what people on the streets told him about the impact of sanctions, the official government position and his own assessment of the situation.