



WIELDING POWER THROUGH CAPITAL? GULF INVESTMENTS IN THE MIDDLE EAST

DAHRENDORF ROOM, ST ANTONY'S COLLEGE

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WAFAW-ERC, Institut français du Proche Orient (oPt)

Middle East Centre, St Antony's College

Maison Française d'Oxford

Oxford Gulf and Arabian Peninsula Studies Forum

RATIONALE:

The goal of this research seminar is to analyse, through a comparative approach, the rise of the Gulf States' financial might in the Middle East, and to explore the diffusion and impact of their capitalist/liberal values and practices.

The Gulf States play a major role in the MENA region: they control whole economic sectors of their Arab neighbours, ranging from agribusiness to tourism and telecommunication. This has created sharp inequalities, as shown in the work by Adam Hanieh who analyses the 2011 uprising in the light of the crony-capitalism of Arab regimes. The patterns and operating methods of these investment flows are nevertheless under-researched despite their tremendous impacts in the incipient countries. Massive FDI, building an hinterland serving the Gulf economies and power, help to sustain growth as much as they

result in growing wealth disparities and class differences: who are the actors involved? What logics or push factors did drive the Gulf entrepreneurs to diversify their geographical scope of operations? How is this financial domination wielded in the local economies and how does it translate into spatial and territorial inequalities? Does consumerism makes it painless? Can we identify patterns of resistance, beside the obvious anti-Gulf sentiment, as Gulf States are perceived as rich and haughty?

Program

9:00-9:30	<p>Welcoming remarks: Prof. Eugene Rogan, Director of the Middle East Centre, St Antony, University of Oxford</p> <p>Rationale: Dr. Claire Beaugrand, IFPO-oPt</p>
9:30-11:00	<p>PANEL 1: Gulf capital and Multifaceted Power: Theoretical Perspectives</p> <p>Dr. Eckart Woertz (CIDOB, Barcelona ; Sciences Po, Paris) <i>Gulf investments: Who, where, why and in what sectors?</i></p> <p>Dr. Rafeef Ziadah (SOAS, London) <i>Constructing a regional logistics space: perspectives from the Gulf Cooperation Council</i></p> <p>Dr. Leïla Vignal (Refugee Studies Centre, Department of International Developmen, University of Oxford, Wolfson College) <i>Exploiting the periphery to sustain the core: The Middle East as the backyard of Gulf investments.</i></p>
11:00 -11:30	Break
11:30-12:45	<p>PANEL 2: Levant states: Unequal Balance of Power, Small Markets</p> <p>Mays AbdelAziz (Wana Foundation, Amman) <i>The nexus of Kuwaiti investments and aid in Jordan</i></p> <p>Dr. Claire Beaugrand (Ifpo, oPt) <i>Gulf investors and Palestinian entrepreneurs since Oslo.</i></p> <p>Dr. Hannes Bauman (University of Liverpool; Leverhum Trust) <i>How Gulf capital is remaking Arab cities: Amman, Beirut, Rabat, Ramallah</i></p>
12:45-13:45	Lunch
14:00-15:30	<p>PANEL 3: Investing in Regional Economic Powers: Egypt, Turkey, Iran</p> <p>Chris Henderson (SOAS, London), <i>Gulf investment in Egyptian agribusiness, authoritarianism and the state-capital nexus</i></p> <p>Maïa Sinno (Paris I Sorbonne) <i>Gulf countries investments in Cairo real estate: urban, economic and political influence</i></p>

	Suliman al-Atiqi (University of Oxford; OxGaps) <i>Turkey-GCC trade outlook: historical and contemporary drivers</i>
15:30-16:00	Coffee break
16:00-16:30	Dr. Karen Young (Arab Gulf States Institute, Washington ; MEC, London School of Economics) <i>The logic of economic ties between the GCC and Iran</i> -via SKYPE.

17:00-18:30 Public Lecture at the Maison Française d'Oxford.

Chair: Dr. Adeel Malik, Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies & Department of International Development

Dr. Eckart Woertz (CIDOB, Barcelona; Sciences Po, Paris)

Food Security and Land Grabs : Missing Links and the Role of Gulf Investments

See : <http://www.mfo.ac.uk/en/node/4679>