



PRESENTAZIONE DEL VOLUME

(a cura dell'autore o del curatore)

Informazioni generali

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Informazioni sul volume

As the title clearly suggests, this book ambitiously aims at exploring Public International Law (PIL, or simply IL) through the lens of Political Economy (PE). Although interdisciplinarity seems to have become a must in most areas of academic research and so in the sphere of law, *The Political Economy of International Law – A European Perspective* is the first edited book providing a systematic and coherent review of the interactions between PE and IL.

PE is not a unified discipline. This entails that the term 'Political Economy' is used in different ways. In its most common meaning, PE refers to interdisciplinary studies drawing upon economics, law, and political science in explaining how political institutions, the political environment, and the economic system influence each other. Given the overlap between legal and political systems, some of the issues in PE are also raised in Law and Economics – i.e., the application of economic, specifically microeconomic, methods to legal analysis – Constitutional Economics and Political Science. PE is also often associated with rational-choice

theories relying on the assumption that an actor, be it an individual, a State or an international organisation, acts intentionally in order to achieve its set of goals.

In this book, PE refers to the study of the ‘why’ questions (why do we have laws, institutions, courts) using as explanatory variables the ‘who’ questions (who are the actors – legislators, executives, judges, interest groups within a country, a country itself or international organisations, NGOs, business – that participate in shaping IL) and ‘what’ motivates them (their preferences) on the one hand and their constraints (power, resources, institutions and laws etc.) on the other hand. A change of the law may lead to a change in the constraints. PE combines a descriptive approach, explaining why we sometimes are unable to achieve the best possible outcome, and a prescriptive approach, suggesting how to move in a way that would be more efficient or democratic.

The contributors reflect the need felt by international lawyers to open their traditional frontiers to insights from other disciplines – and political economy in particular. The methodological approach of the book is to take the traditional list of topics for a general treatise of international law, and to systematically incorporate insights from political economy to each.