

Sarah El-Kazaz

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Education

Ph.D. Politics, Princeton University (Defended September 10, 2014)
Fields: Comparative Politics, Political Cultures and Systems: the Near East, Formal and Quantitative Methods

M.A. Politics with a concentration in International Relations, New York University, 2007

B.A. Political Science (*summa cum laude*), American University in Cairo, 2006

Additional training:

- International Institute for Asian Studies Macau Winter School on Urban Studies, December 2013
- Institute for Qualitative and Multi-Method Research, Syracuse University, 2010

Academic Positions

2014 – The Neubauer Post-Doctoral Fellow, Crown Center For Middle Eastern Studies, Brandeis University

Book Project

“Building Politics: Urban Transformation and Governance in Cairo and Istanbul”

The book project, based on my dissertation, examines the political economy of governance in contemporary Middle Eastern cities. I argue that neo-liberalization and globalization have empowered a new variety of local and international non-state actors and state agencies to redesign urban public and private buildings and infrastructure. I demonstrate that these actors invest in urban redesign as a political tool that is expected to mold societal behaviors, construct ‘imagined communities’ and reorder power hierarchies. Comparing the contentious implementation of six urban renewal projects across Istanbul and Cairo I find that urban redesign as a political tool operates differently in Cairo and Istanbul. In a neo-liberalizing Cairo, non-state actors mobilize urban redesign as a political tool that would replace forms of political work once performed by the now retrenched state. In Istanbul, with a strong governing state, non-state actors mobilize urban redesign to complement a larger state project aiming to manage the paradoxes of globalization. Ultimately, I argue that studying urban redesign as a political tool within its institutional contexts is crucial for revealing the sites of political contention that define state-society relations in the contemporary Middle East, shedding light on the micro-dynamics underlying large-scale protests like those in Gezi Park. The book project is based on a year of ethnographic fieldwork in Cairo and Istanbul in 2011-2012 conducted in Arabic and Turkish.

Committee: Mark Beissinger (Chair), Amaney Jamal, Timothy Mitchell and Deborah Yashar

Teaching and Research Interests

Comparative Politics, Middle East Politics, Urban Politics, Social Movements, Political Economy of Development, Political Geography and Qualitative Research Methods

Fellowship Awards and Grants

Clifford Roberts Graduate Fellow, Eisenhower Institute, Gettysburg College, 2013-2014

Graduate Fellow, Princeton Institute of International and Regional Studies, 2013-2014

Bobst Center for Peace and Justice, Dissertation Research Grant, 2011 and 2012

Princeton Institute for International and Regional Studies, Summer Language Grant, 2010

Honorable Mention, National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship, 2009

Critical Languages Scholarship, Turkish Language, Georgetown University McGhee Center, Alanya, Turkey, 2007

Working Papers:

“Governing Private Property: Urban Renewal and Remaking Real Estate in Cairo and Istanbul”

“‘Possessing’ the City’s History: Heritage Preservation and Assembling Power in Istanbul and Cairo”

Conference Presentations and Invited Talks

“Designing Protest: Urban Architectural Redesign and Spaces of Contestation in Globalizing Istanbul and Cairo”

-2014 Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association

“‘Possessing’ the City’s History: Heritage Preservation and Assembling Power in Istanbul and Cairo”

- Invited Lecture, Swarthmore College, April 2014

“The Politics of the Public’s Interest: Historical Preservation and Contesting Public Spaces in Istanbul and Cairo”

- 2013 Annual Meeting of the Middle East Studies Association

“Whose City? Non-State Actors, Urban Renewal and Defining ‘Community’ In Istanbul and Cairo”

- 2013 Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association

“‘Possessing’ the City’s History: Private Property, Urban Renewal and Assembling Public Memory in Istanbul and Cairo”

- 2013 Annual Meeting of the American Association of Geographers

“A Visible Public: Gazing, Renewal and Reconfiguring the ‘Public’ in Istanbul and Cairo”

- 2013 Annual MESAAS Graduate Student Conference at Columbia University
- 2013 Urban Objects Graduate Student Conference at the University of Pennsylvania

“Cairo Transforms: The Political Economy of Urban Transformation in Cairo”

- IMECE, Istanbul Urban Activists Platform, TMMOB Chamber of Mechanical Engineers, Istanbul, Turkey, June 2012

“Of Merchants and Nations: Minority Trading Communities and Economic Nationalism”

- 2010 Annual Meeting of the Middle East Studies Association

“The Role of Experts in Palestine in the 1920s”

- 2007 International and Area Studies Breslauer Graduate Symposium at the University of California, Berkeley

Teaching Experience

Teaching Assistant for Amaney Jamal, POL 364, “Politics of the Middle East,” Princeton University, Spring 2011

Teaching Assistant for Charles Beitz, POL 313, “Global Justice,” Princeton University, Fall 2010

Book Review and Other Writing

El-Kazaz, Sarah. “Review of *A City Consumed: Urban Commerce, the Cairo Fire, and the Politics of Decolonization in Egypt*, by Nancy Y. Reynolds,” *Arab Studies Journal*, v.21, no.1 (Spring 2013)

El-Kazaz, Sarah. “It is About the Park: A Struggle For Turkey’s Cities,” in *JADMAG: ‘Resistance Everywhere’: The Gezi Protests and Dissident Visions of Turkey*, ed. Anthony Alessandrini, Nazan Üstündağ, and Emrah Yildiz, (Tadween Publishing, February 2014) [Originally appeared on Jadaliyya.com in June of 2013]

Research Experience

Research Assistant for Jon Kastlelec, Princeton University, Fall 2012

Research Associate at the Innovations for Successful Societies Program, Woodrow Wilson School, Princeton University, Summer 2009

Intern, Organization of the Islamic Conference Mission to the United Nations, Fall 2006

Research Assistant for Monika Thakur, American University in Cairo, Spring 2006

Professional Service

Conference Organizer, A Critical Engagement with the Study of Middle Eastern Cities, Princeton University, May 2013 (with Amaney Jamal and Kevin Mazur)

Speaker Series Organizer, New Perspectives on the Modern Middle East--Meet the Author Book Series, Princeton University, Spring 2013 (with Kevin Mazur)

Reading Group Organizer, Interdisciplinary Middle East Reading Group, Princeton University, Fall 2008 – Fall 2010

Associational membership: American Political Science Association and Middle East Studies Association

Language Skills

Native: Arabic, English

Advanced: Turkish, French

References:

Mark Beissinger (Chair), 237 Corwin Hall, Princeton University, Princeton NJ, 08544, (609) 258-8261, mbeissin@princeton.edu

Amaney Jamal, 241 Corwin Hall, Princeton University, Princeton, NJ 08544, (609) 258-7340, ajamal@princeton.edu

Timothy Mitchell, 407 Knox Hall, Columbia University, New York, NY 10027, (212) 854-5252, tm2421@columbia.edu

Deborah Yashar, 219 Bendheim Hall, Princeton University, Princeton, NJ 08544, (609) 258-2771, dyashar@princeton.edu

Charles Beitz, 302 Marx Hall, Princeton University, Princeton, NJ 08544, (609) 258-4853, cbeitz@princeton.edu

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