Dr Sara Fregonese MA, PhD

Birmingham Fellow

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About

Sara Fregonese is Birmingham Fellow at the **School of Geography, Earth and Environmental Studies (/schools/gees/index.aspx)** and the **Institute for Conflict, Cooperation and Security (/research/activity/conflict-cooperation-security/index.aspx)**. Her research lies in political and urban geography and is concerned with the impact of geopolitics and security on urban life. Her work deals with civil war and urban warfare, radicalization, social cohesion and uprising. Her main empirical focus is Lebanon. She publishes in leading international journals including *Political Geography* and *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*.

Qualifications

BA Oriental Languages and Cultures (Ca' Foscari University of Venice)
MA Cross-Mediterranean Cooperation (Ca' Foscari University of Venice)
PhD Geography (Newcastle)

Biography

From 1998 to 2003, Sara studied Middle Eastern languages and cultures at the University of Venice, where the following year she obtained an MA in Mediterranean cooperation.

In 2008 Sara was awarded a PhD in Geography from Newcastle University. Her doctoral thesis was titled 'City, War, And Geopolitics. Political violence and the built environment in the Lebanese civil war'.

From 2008 to 2009, Sara was research assistant in the ESRC project **'The built environment: mirror and mediator of radicalization' (http://www.sed.manchester.ac.uk/architecture/research/radicalisation/)** at the University of Manchester.

From 2009 to 2012, Sara was British Academy Post-Doctoral Fellow in the Department of Geography at Royal Holloway, University of London. She joined the School of Geography, Earth and Environmental Sciences as a Birmingham Fellow in January 2012.

Postgraduate supervision

Ian Slesinger (ESRC Studentship) *Waging Safer War?: Technology, risk and the shift towards post-network-centric warfare in Israel's military conflicts 2002-2012* (with Julian Clark)

Peter McMenamin (AHRC Studentship) *Rethinking, space, landscapes and aesthetics in conditions of contestation: The changing nature of cultural iconography in Derry, 1970-2013* (with Dominique Moran)

Sara would be glad to hear from potential PhD students with proposals on both contemporary and historical aspects of the following subjects:

- Political geography / geopolitics
- Urban geopolitics, security, conflict
- The Middle East and Lebanon
- Radicalisation, polarisation and social cohesion
- Geographies of protest, including 'Arab uprisings' and 'Occupy' movements

Research

Sara's research is multi-lingual and trans-disciplinary: it draws on theories in critical geopolitics and critical sovereignty, and at the same time advances current debates in urban geopolitics, radicalisation and cohesion, urban resilience and spaces of protest.

Her research is structured along three strands:

1. **The links between physical urban environments and social contestation** **(Fregonese 2009) (http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.polgeo.2009.07.005)**. This includes research on the ways sovereignty is implemented in cities, with a focus on the role of non-state actors **(Fregonese 2012) (http://dx.doi.org/10.1068/d11410)**. Findings on this subject will appear in the volume *War and the city: Urban geopolitics in Lebanon*, in preparation with IB Tauris.
2. **The urban implications of social polarization and the impact of urban design on social cohesion** **(Fregonese and Brand 2009) (http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/10630730903278546)**. Considering how urban communities go from coexistence to violence and vice-versa, and pays attention to unequal experiences of coexistence **(Fregonese 2012) (http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/j.1931-0846.2012.00154.x)**. It focuses on the role that specific urban infrastructure and planning policies have in influencing multi-cultural processes. On this topic, she is co-author of the forthcoming book ***The radical's city. Urban environment, polarisation, cohesion (http://www.exploringgeopolitics.org/books/Fregonese_book.png)***.
3. **Cities, transition, resilience**: focusing on urban and everyday aspects of security and resilience in the wake of socio-political uprising, regime transition, rioting and

protest in the Middle East and elsewhere. This strand considers uprising and protest as key to understand contemporary urban security. It aims to develop understandings of urban security that do not alienate communities from authorities, while guaranteeing the democratic right to protest. On this topic, Sara led the British Academy-funded workshop ***City/State/Resistance: spaces of protest in the Middle East and the Mediterranean (http://tinyurl.com/9rd76kn)*** .

Sara's research has been supported by:

2011-2012
British Academy Small Research Grant £ 7,301
Views from the Holiday Inn. War, urban landscape, and memory in Beirut.

2009-2012
British Academy Post-Doctoral Fellowship £ 258,315
Geographical Perspectives on War and Cities: the case of Beirut.

2004-2007
PhD Studentship, School of Geography, Politics and Sociology, Newcastle University.

Other activities

Sara is a Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society with the Institute of British Geographers.

She has been an affiliate of the Center for Arab and Middle Eastrn Studies (CAMES) at the American University of Beirut, Lebanon and a honorary fellow of the Manchester Architecture Research Centre, University of Manchester.

She has convened international workshops at Manchester (2008 and 2009), Royal Holloway (2011), as well as organizing sessions at the annual meetings of the Association of American Geographers (2012) and the Royal Geographical Society (2010).

Sara has given invited lectures and seminars at the Universities of Manchester, Newcastle, Royal Holloway, London's Institute for Advanced Studies, Orient Institut Beirut, and to the London Group of Historical Geographers. She has also presented her research at the annual conferences of the Association of American Geographers, the Royal Geographical Society as well as conferences and workshops at Al Jazeera's Institute of Studies, Conflict in Cities, and the International Boundaries Research Unit, Durham University.

Editorial board roles: *Geopolitics*; *Geopolitical Bodies*, *Material Worlds* book series (Rowman&Littlefield).

Peer-reviews: Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC); Italy's National Agency for the Evaluation of Universities and Research Institutes (ANVUR); *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, *Geographical Journal*, *Cultural Geographies*, *Journal of Urban Technology*, *Security Dialogue*, *Urban Geography*, *Geography Compass*, *Geopolitics*, *Progress in Planning*.

Publications

Books

Fregonese, S. (forthcoming, 2014) *War and the city: Urban geopolitics in Lebanon.* IB Tauris.

Brand, R. and Fregonese, S. (2013) The radical's city. Urban environment, polarisation, cohesion. Ashgate.

Journal articles

Fregonese, S. (2012) "Beyond the 'weak state': hybrid sovereignties in Beirut" *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 30(4): 655-674.
http://dx.doi.org/10.1068/d11410 (http://dx.doi.org/10.1068/d11410)

Fregonese, S. (2012) "Between a refuge and a battleground. Beirut's discrepant cosmopolitanisms." *Geographical Review 102:* 316–336

Fregonese, S. (2012) "Urban geopolitics, 8 years on. Accounting for hybridity, the everyday, and peace". *Geography Compass* 6 (5):290-303.
http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/j.1749-8198.2012.00485.x (http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/j.1749-8198.2012.00485.x)

Fregonese, S. (2009) "The urbicide of Beirut? Geopolitics and the built environment in the Lebanese civil war", *Political Geography* 28 (5): 309-318.
http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.polgeo.2009.07.005 (http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.polgeo.2009.07.005)

Fregonese, S. and Brand, R. (2009) "Polarisation as socio-technical phenomenon. A bibliographical review", *Journal of Urban Technology* 16(2-3): 9-34.
http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/10630730903278546 (http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/10630730903278546)

Book chapters

Fregonese, S. (forthcoming December 2014) "Everyday political geographies". In Agnew J., Mamadouh V., Secor A., Sharp J. (eds) *The Wiley-Blackwell Companion to Political Geography*. London: Wiley-Blackwell.

Commentaries and reports

Fregonese, S. (2013) Mediterranean geographies of protest. European Urban and Regional Studies 20 (1)*:* 109-114doi: 10.1177/0969776412460528

Fregonese, S. (2011) Beyond the domino. Transnational (in)security and the 2011 protests. Environment and Planning D blog.
http://societyandspace.com/2011/10/20/sara-fregonese-arab-protests (http://societyandspace.com/2011/10/20/sara-fregonese-arab-protests)

Fregonese, S., Martin, D. and Ramadan, A. (2009) The new geopolitics of responsibility in Barack Obama's Cairo speech, Environment and Planning D: Society and Space 27(6): 951 – 955. **http://dx.doi.org/10.1068/d2706ea (http://dx.doi.org/10.1068/d2706ea)**

Brand, R. Coaffee, J. and Fregonese, S. (2008) Project report: The urban environment: mirror and mediator of radicalisation? Foreign and Commonwealth Office, London, 18 September.
http://tinyurl.com/cug7n5c (http://tinyurl.com/cug7n5c)

Book Reviews

Fregonese, S. (2012) "Kousis, M., Selwyn, T. and Clark, D. (eds.) Contested Mediterranean spaces. Ethnographic essays in honour of Charles Tilly" *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space.* http://societyandspace.com/reviews/reviews-archive/kousis/

Fregonese, S. (2010) "Coward M. 'Urbicide: The Politics of Urban Destruction'" Global Discourse, 1(II): 2-4. Book Review.

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