

# Görkem Aydemir-Kundakcı

Curriculum Vitae

University of Calgary  
Department of Anthropology and Archaeology  
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## EDUCATION

- 2022            **The George Washington University**, Washington, D.C.  
Ph.D. in Anthropology  
M.A. in Anthropology  
Dissertation: *Eventful Things of a Frozen Conflict: Contingency, Materiality, and Movement in the Contested Periphery of Georgia*
- 2010            **Sabancı University**, Istanbul  
M.A. in Cultural Studies
- 2006            **Boğaziçi University**, Istanbul  
B.A. in English Language and Literature  
Minor in American Studies

## ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

- 2022-present    **University of Calgary**, Calgary, AB  
Faculty of Arts' Postdoctoral Fellow  
Department of Anthropology and Archaeology

## RESEARCH and TEACHING INTERESTS

Mobility and migration, borders, the state and sovereignty, conflict and uncertainty, materiality, space and time, multispecies ethnography, digital ethnography, experimental ethnographic methods, post-Soviet studies, Georgia and the Caucasus

## PUBLICATIONS

### Books

- In Progress    *Contested Movements: Material and Temporal Anatomy of Life in Georgia's Frozen Conflict*  
Preparing book proposal upon interest from Cornell University Press.

### Peer-Reviewed Articles and Book Chapters

- Under review    "Generative Exhaustions: Thresholds of Long-term Uncertainty and Stinkbug Crisis in Georgia's Contested Borderland." *History and Anthropology*.
- 2021            "Contingent Homes: Mobility and Long-term Conflict in the Contested Periphery of Georgia." *Journal of Refugee Studies*. Volume 34. Issue 1.

- 2017 “Constructing Lives on the Move: Displacement and Return in the de facto Georgia-Abkhazia Borderland.” *Maintaining Refuge: Anthropological Reflections in Uncertain Times*, edited by David Hanes, Jayne Howell and Fethi Keles. Committee on Refugee and Immigrants, American Anthropological Association.

### Public Scholarship

- Under Review “Electric Zone.” *Anthropology News*.
- 2021 “Uncertainty and Viral Emergencies in the Margins of Georgia.” *Anthropology News*. March 24.
- 2014 “Küresel Kamu Malları Olarak Küresel Normlar (Global Norms as Global Public Good)” with Hakan Altınay, Burcu Baran, and Cansu Ekmekcioğlu. *İktisat ve Toplum (Economics and Society)*.

### Working Papers

- In progress “Border Places” (Photo Essay) (for submission to “Anthropological Currents” in *Current Anthropology*)
- In progress “From Decay to *Remont*: Repair, Ruination, and Long-term Displacement in Collective Centers of Post-Soviet Georgia” (for submission to *American Ethnologist*); winner of the Society for the Anthropology of Europe’s 2017 Graduate Student Paper Prize
- In progress “Elastic Borders: Sensory Topologies of Movement in the Disputed Georgia-Abkhazia Borderland” (invited chapter contribution to the volume *Twisting the Fabric of Sovereignty: Torsions, Distortions, and the Topological Imagination* edited by Rebecca Bryant and Franck Billè)

### TEACHING EXPERIENCE

- 2022-present **University of Calgary**, Calgary, AB  
 Instructor: Introduction to Social and Cultural Anthropology (Spring 2023)
- 2013- 2022 **George Washington University**, Washington, D.C.  
 Graduate Teaching Assistant: Introduction to Sociocultural Anthropology (Fall 2013 - two sections, Sarah Wagner; Spring 2014 – three sections, Richard Grinker; Fall 2014 - three sections, Richard Grinker)  
 Language and Culture in Society (Spring 2015 - three sections, Alexander Dent)  
 Anthropology of Human Rights (Fall 2015 - three sections, Robert Shepherd)  
 Anthropology of Development (Spring 2016 - three sections, Robert Shepherd)  
 Grader: Anthropology of Forensic Science and Technologies of Truth (Fall 2018, Sarah Wagner)  
 Anthropology of Science and Technology (Spring 2020, Sarah Wagner)
- 2007-2009 **Sabancı University**, Istanbul  
 Graduate Teaching Assistant: Major Works of Western Art (Fall 2008 - two sections; Spring 2009 - two sections, Bratislav Pantelic)  
 Grader: Major Works of Literature (Fall 2007; Spring 2008, Deniz Ceylan & Hulya Adak)

## AWARDS AND HONORS

### External Grants and Awards

- 2022-2023      **KU Leuven**, Leuven  
Postdoctoral Mandate (PDM) (declined)
- 2021            **American Council of Learned Societies (ACLS)**  
Emerging Voices Finalist Research Grant
- 2017            **Society for the Anthropology of Europe (SAE)**  
Graduate Student Paper Prize Competition, Winner
- 2016-2017     **National Science Foundation (NSF)**  
Cultural Anthropology Doctoral Dissertation Improvement Grant
- 2008            **Central European University, Hungary**  
Summer School Scholarship

### Internal Grants and Fellowships

- 2019 Fall        **George Washington University**  
Dean's Dissertation Completion Grant
- 2019 Summer   **George Washington University**  
Summer Dissertation Fellowship
- 2019 Spring     **Institute for European, Russian, and Eurasian Studies**  
Hoffman Fellowship
- 2014, 2015      **Lewis N. Cotlow Foundation**  
Lewis N. Cotlow Grant for Ethnographic Research
- 2014            **Institute for European, Russian, and Eurasian Studies**  
Summer Language Scholarship
- 2013-2014      **Institute for European, Russian, and Eurasian Studies**  
Doctoral Student Fellowship
- 2013-2020      **The George Washington University**  
University Fellowship (declined AY2016-2017, 2017-2018)
- 2007-2009      **Sabancı University, Turkey**  
University Fellowship

## PRESENTATIONS

### Invited Talks and Lectures

- 2023            “From Decay to *Remont*: Long-term Displacement and Space in Urban Collective Centers of Georgia,” Cornell University, Ethnographies of Brokenness and Repair, April 14.

- 2022 “‘Globalization’ and Anthropology,” University of Calgary, Anthropological Theory, November 14.
- 2022 “Ethnographic Methods in Contested Spaces,” George Washington University, Methods in Sociocultural Anthropology, March 3 (held virtually).
- 2021 “Reviving the Passports of a Dead State: Il/legalities in the de facto Georgia-Abkhazia Borderland,” Center for Russian Studies—Bilkent University, November 11 (held virtually).
- 2021 “‘Even bugs are against us’: Time and Space During Georgia’s Stinkbug Crisis,” George Washington University, Introduction to Sociocultural Anthropology, April 24 (held virtually).
- 2021 “Innovative Ethnographic Methods: Mapping-Storytelling and Object Biographies,” Kenyon College, Methods in Cultural Anthropology, March 20 (held virtually).
- 2020 “Homes in Decay: Ruination and Long-term Displacement in Urban Collective Centers of Georgia.” Ilia State University, Anthropology Seminars, July 10 (held virtually).
- 2020 “Convulsive Futures: Contingency, Time, and Stinkbug Infestation in the Contested Periphery of Post-Soviet Georgia.” University of Ottawa, Sociology & Anthropology Workshops, Ottawa, February 7.
- 2019 “Contingent Returns, Contingent Homes: Border Crossings and Displacement in the Contested Margins of Georgia.” University of Calgary, The Anarky Talks, Calgary, October 23.
- 2017 “Displacement and Border Crossings in Georgia’s De Facto Border with Abkhazia.” Ilia State University, Anthropology Summer School, Tbilisi, September 21.
- 2017 “Lives on the Move: Mobility and Materiality in Georgia-Abkhazia Borderland.” Ilia State University, Anthropology Seminar Series, Tbilisi, March 21.
- 2016 “Displaced or at Home? Border Crossings, Displacement, and Return in the Georgia-Abkhazia Borderland.” Return, Remixing, and Reconciliation: Lessons to be Learned, Pricyprus Centre, Nicosia, November 26.
- 2016 “Long-Term Displacement and Ruination in Post-Soviet Georgia.” Peripheral Visions: Urbanism at the Edges of Europe. American Ethnological Society Spring Meeting, Washington, D.C., March 18.
- 2015 “Roundtable Discussion, Ukraine: When Crisis Shapes the Country.” Emergence: American Ethnological Society Spring Meeting, San Diego, CA, March 12-14.

### **Panels/Conferences Organized**

- 2023 Co-organizer (with Sarah Richardson): “Living Uncertainty: Frameworks of Agency, Possibility, and Injury.” American Anthropological Association Meeting, Toronto, November 15-19.
- 2022 Co-organizer (three-part panel with Scott Ross): “Infrastructural Intimacies.” American Anthropological Association Annual Meeting, Seattle, WA, November 9-13.

- 2018 Co-organizer (with Tetiana Bulakh): “Coping with Displacement: Experiences of Forced Migration, Conflict, and Uncertainty.” American Anthropological Association Annual Meeting, San Jose, CA, November 16.
- 2015 Co-organizer (with Sarah Richardson) of the Symposium: Disclosures: Meaning and Materiality across Spaces. Annual Anthropology Symposium, George Washington University, Washington, D.C., March 20.

**Selected Presentations and Workshops**

- 2023 “Elastic Borders: Sensory Topologies of Movement in the Disputed Georgia-Abkhazia Borderland.” American Association of Geographers, Denver, CO, March 25.
- 2023 Discussant for “Resilience in the Environmental and Energy Humanities.” University of Calgary Energy in Society and FRIAS Workshop, Banff, AB, March 17-20.
- 2022 “Electric Zone: Infrastructural Encounters in Georgia’s Contested Periphery.” American Anthropological Association Annual Meeting, Seattle, WA, November 9.
- 2020 “Convulsive Futures: Contingency, Time, and Stinkbug Infestation in Georgia.” European Association of Social Anthropologists Annual Meeting, July 22 (held virtually).
- 2020 “Mapping and Telling the *Chernyi Vkhod*: Unofficial Crossings and Senses of Border-ness in the Disputed Periphery of Georgia.” American Ethnological Society Spring Meeting, March 26-28; conference cancelled due to COVID-19.
- 2019 “‘Even bugs are against us’: Multispecies Encounters, Uncertainty, and Long-term Displacement in Post-Soviet Georgia.” AAA/CASCA Annual Meeting, Vancouver, November 21.
- 2018 “Contingent Homes: Displacement, Return, and Modes of Crossings in the Disputed Georgia-Abkhazia Borderland.” American Anthropological Association Annual Meeting, San Jose, CA, November 16.
- 2017 “Homes in Decay: Long-term Displacement and Urban Collective Centers in Post-Soviet Georgia.” Society for the Anthropology of Europe Café Europa: Graduate Student Paper Prize Competition Finalists, American Anthropological Association Annual Meeting, Washington, D.C., November 30.
- 2015 “Homes in Decay: Displacement and Ruination in Georgia,” American Anthropological Association Annual Meeting, Denver, CO, November 18.
- 2015 “‘Looking down from a Christmas Tree’: Displacement and Memory in Georgia.” American Ethnological Society Spring Meeting, San Diego, CA, March 13.
- 2014 “IDP, Returnee, or Both? Border Crossings and the Curious Case of Gali.” Cotlow Research Conference, Washington, D.C., October 17.
- 2014 “Ordering the City, Ordering the Memory: Displacement, Memory, and the Hotel Iveria Case in Georgia.” Anthropoplus Conference, College Park, MD, March 21.

**RESEARCH EXPERIENCE and COLLABORATIONS**

- 2023-Present Canada: University of Calgary Office of the Vice President and Calgary Institute of the Humanities Research on Transdisciplinarity  
*Literature review, best practices and barriers research*
- 2022-Present Georgia: Ethnographic research on infrastructure and mobility  
*Oral history, interviews, participant observation, document analysis, digital storytelling, collaborative mapping and visualization*
- 2014-Present Georgia: Ethnographic research on border crossings  
*Oral history, household surveys, interviews, participant observation, cognitive maps and storytelling, object biographies, family album and document analysis*
- 2014- Present Georgia: Ethnographic research on IDP collective centers and ruination  
*Oral history, interviews, participant observation*
- 2010-2012 Georgia: Oral history project on 1990s and post-Soviet spatial changes  
*Interviews*
- 2007-2010 Turkey: Ethnographic research on global professionals with MBA degrees  
*Participant observation, interviews*

**PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE**

- 2009-2014 **Global Civics Project (Brookings Institute)**, Istanbul  
Research Assistant
- 2011-2012 **7 Billionth Person Project (Open Society Foundation)**, Istanbul  
Co-founder
- 2009-2010 **MY Executive Human Resources Consulting Company**, Istanbul  
Senior Researcher
- 2006-2007 **MY Executive Human Resources Consulting Company**, Istanbul  
Researcher

**SERVICE**

- 2021 Reviewer for *Caucasus Survey, Anthropological Quarterly*
- 2020 Co-author of the undergraduate thesis manual in Anthropology at George Washington University
- 2020 Turkish Language Co-Editor for *Life by Algorithms: How Roboprocesses are Remaking Our World*, edited by Catherine Besteman and Hugh Gusterson, University of Chicago Press, 2019.
- 2018 Social Media Editor of GW Anthropology Department
- 2016-2018 Graduate Thesis Advising, Ilia State University and Tbilisi State University
- 2015 Editorial Screening for *Anthropological Quarterly*

2014-2015 Co-organizer of GW Anthropology Department Reading Group

**LANGUAGES**

**Turkish** – Native speaker; **English** – Advanced; **Russian** – Lower Advanced; **Georgian** – Lower Advanced;  
**Megrelian** – Basic.