

# UMUT YILDIRIM

## Curriculum Vitae

Assistant Professor of Anthropology  
Department of Anthropology and Sociology  
The Geneva Graduate Institute  
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### RESEARCH INTERESTS

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State, sovereignty, and war; Forced migration and resettlement; Extraction, development, gender, and aid policies; Environmental anthropology; Anthropology of the sea; Political, social, and ecological movements; Embodiment, affect, and subjectivity; Historiography; Kurdish studies; Middle Eastern, European, and Mediterranean ethnography.

### ACADEMIC POSITIONS

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September 2022 onwards

Assistant Professor, Department of Anthropology & Sociology  
Faculty Associate, Global Migration Center  
Faculty Associate, Gender Center  
Faculty Associate, Hoffman Centre for Global Sustainability

January 2022–August 2022

Distinguished Research Fellow, UCLA Center for Near Eastern Studies, USA.

September 2020–December 2021

Einstein Stiftung Research Fellow, Freie Universität Berlin, Institute for Cultural and Social Anthropology, Germany.

September 2018–August 2020

Post-doctoral Fellow, Institute for Cultural Inquiry, ICI Berlin, Germany.

September 2010–June 2017

Part-time faculty, Department of Sociology, Boğaziçi University, Turkey; Department of Cultural Studies, Sabanci University

### EDUCATION

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September 2004–February 2011

MPhil and PhD University of Cambridge, Department of Social Anthropology, UK.

September 2003–June 2004

MSc The London School of Economics and Political Science, Department of Social Anthropology, London, UK.

September 2000–June 2003

MA Boğaziçi University, Institute for Modern Turkish History & Department of History,

Istanbul, Turkey.

September 1995–June 2000

BA Business Administration, Koç University, Istanbul, Turkey.

## PUBLICATIONS

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### Book Manuscript

Contracted with Stanford University Press; forthcoming Fall 2026.

*An Extractive: War and Resistance in a Kurdish Middle Eastern Frontier*

### Edited Book Volume

2023 *War-torn Ecologies, An-archic Fragments: Reflections from the Middle East*. Foreword by Françoise Vergès. Cultural Inquiry Series, 27. Berlin: ICI Berlin Press.

### Book Chapters

2024 Eco-redaction as Method. In *[Redacted]: Ethnography in the Negative Space of Political Power*, Franck Billé, Lisa Min, and Charlene Makley. California: Punctum Press. [Excerpt from Mulberry Affects].

2023 War-torn Ecologies: Human and More-than-Human Intersections of Ethnography and the Arts. In *War-torn Ecologies, An-archic Fragments: Reflections from the Middle East*. Foreword by Françoise Vergès. Cultural Inquiry Series, 27. Pp. 1–26. Berlin: ICI Berlin Press.

2023 Mulberry Affects: Ecology, Memory, and Aesthetics on the Shores of the Tigris River in the Wake of Genocide. In *War-torn Ecologies, An-archic Fragments: Reflections from the Middle East*. Foreword by Françoise Vergès. Cultural Inquiry Series, 27. Pp. 27–66. Berlin: ICI Berlin Press.

2020 Glaze, or Formulas to Get through Bad Weather. In *The Weather*, ed. by Christoph F. E. Holzhey and Arnd Wedemeyer, Cultural Inquiry, 16. Berlin: ICI Berlin Press.

### Special Issue

2025 Under review with the *Journal of Royal Anthropological Institute*. Co-authored with Yael Navaro and Daniel Ruiz-Serna, *Political Mass Violence and More-than-Human Memory*.

### Peer-reviewed Journal Articles

2025 Under review with *JRAI*. “More-than-human Memory: Introduction,” co-authored with Yael Navaro and Daniel Ruiz-Serna for the Special Issue on *Political Mass Violence and More-than-Human Memory*, co-edited with Yael Navaro and Daniel Ruiz-Serna.

2025 Under review with the *Journal of Royal Anthropological Institute*. A Liquid Archive: Sovereignty, Mobility, and Fishing in the Istanbul Sea. In *Political Mass Violence and More-than-Human Memory*, co-edited with Yael Navaro and Daniel Ruiz-Serna.

2024 Resistant Breathing: Ruined and Decolonial Ecologies in a Middle Eastern Heritage Site. *Current Anthropology* 65(1):123–142.

2024 Breathing at Low Intensity. *Current Anthropology* 65(1):143–149.

- 2021 Spaced out States: Decolonizing Trauma in a War-torn Middle Eastern City. *Current Anthropology* 62(6):717–734.
- 2021 Spacing out Methodologically: A response. *Current Anthropology* 62(6):735–740.
- 2019 Space, Loss and Resistance: A Haunted Pool-Map in South-Eastern Turkey. *Anthropological Theory* 19(4): 440–469.

### **Public Scholarship**

- 2024 Kurdish Decolonial Ecologies. MERIP. July 2024.
- 2023 Resurgence in Translation. *Globe: La Revue de L’Institut*, 31. Printemps 2023.
- 2022 Resistant Roots: Occupied Ecologies on the Shores of Tigris River. *Jadaliyya*. <https://www.jadaliyya.com/Details/43956>
- 2017 Rust. In *The Catalogue of the 15th Istanbul Biennial: A Good Neighbour* curated by the artist duo Elmgreen and Dragset. Pp. 493–503.
- 2016 Beyond the Lesser Evil: A Critical Engagement with Brexit (co-authored with Salih Can Açıksöz). In Green, Sarah, *et al.* Brexit Referendum: First Reactions from Anthropology. *Social Anthropology*: 487–488.
- 2015 Facades and Facelessness. *AllegraLab*. June 2015, online. <https://allegralaboratory.net/facades-and-facelessness-anthrostate/>
- 2013 An Impromptu Uprising: Ethnographic Reflections on the Gezi Park Protests in Turkey (co- edited with Yael Navaro-Yashin). Special Issue. Fieldsights–Hot Spots, *Cultural Anthropology*, October 31, 2013. <https://web.archive.org/web/20181213213448/https://culanth.org/fieldsights/391-an-impromptu-uprising-ethnographic-reflections-on-the-gezi-park-protests-in-turkey>
- 2013 Editorial–An Uprising on the Verge of Comparison. In Yildirim, Umut and Navaro-Yashin, Yael. “An Impromptu Uprising: Ethnographic Reflections on the Gezi Park Protests in Turkey.” Special Issue. Fieldsights–Hot Spots, *Cultural Anthropology*, October 31, 2013. <https://web.archive.org/web/20181213224138/https://culanth.org/fieldsights/410-editorial-an-uprising-on-the-verge-of-comparison>
- 2013 Nefes: Notes on Breath. In Yildirim, Umut and Navaro-Yashin, Yael. “An Impromptu Uprising: Ethnographic Reflections on the Gezi Park Protests in Turkey.” Special Issue. Fieldsights–Hot Spots, *Cultural Anthropology*, October 31, 2013. <https://web.archive.org/web/20181213224214/https://culanth.org/fieldsights/406-nefes-notes-on-breath>

### **Peer-reviewed Journal Articles in Turkish**

- 2002 Magazin Dergilerinde Amerikan İmgesi 1948–1960. *Toplum ve Bilim* 94: 21–217. (The perception of the United States in Popular Magazines in Turkey 1948–1960).

2001 Tarih Yazımına Farklı Bir Öneri: Maduniyet Çalışmaları Projesi. *Toplum ve Bilim* 91:334–343. (An Alternative Historiography: The Subaltern Studies Project).

## **AWARDS and GRANTS**

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June 2024

Project Seed Money for Fieldwork Research: *The Liquid Frontier: Mobility, Sovereignty, and Environmental Politics in the Near-Dead Sea of Marmara*. Research Office. 5,000 CHF.

November 2023 Publication Seed Money for Fieldwork Research: *Decolonial Ecologies in the Kurdish Region in Turkey*. Research Office. 2,500 CHF.

2021–2022

The Middle Eastern Studies Association, MESA Global Academy Grant. 5,000 US.

September 2020–March 2021

Einstein Stiftung Fieldwork Grant. 12,000 Euro.

June 10–16, 2018

Scholarship to attend The New School, Institute for Critical and Social Inquiry, New York, USA. “Theory from the South: Interrogating the Global Dis/Order.” 1,000 US.

September 2004–February 2011

Gates Cambridge Trust, Full grant for the MPhil and the PhD. 100,000 pounds.

September 2005–February 2007

Gates Cambridge Trust, Fieldwork Grant. 10,000 pounds.

September 2005–February 2007

The Board of Graduate Studies, University of Cambridge Dissertation Grant. 5,000 pounds.

September 2005–February 2007

Lucy Cavendish College, University of Cambridge, Dissertation Research Grant. 2,000 pounds.

## **TEACHING**

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ANSO 107: Doctoral Research Seminar I: Themes and Debates

ANSO 162: Anthropology of the State

ANSO 163: Mobilities: Crossings and Containment Across Borders

MINT 500: Resistance: Movement, Insurgency, Revolution

MINT 499: Low Intensities: Counterinsurgency, Counterterrorism, and the Politics of Social Control

### **Post-doctoral mentorship**

- Aydın, Delal. 2024. The SNSF grant to Scholars at Risk, received. Marie-Curie Global Fellowships, 2025 under review.
- Cevik, Hacı. 2025. Ambizione and SNSF Excellence Scheme, under review.
- Işık, Ruşen. 2025. The SNSF Excellence Scheme. Received.
- Kassem, Susann. 2024. Marie Curie Global Fellowship, received.

### **PhD Supervision (5 students)**

- Araj, Izzeddin. ANSO, co-supervision with Graziella Moraes Silva. Completed.

- Chatterjee, Saheli. International History and Politics, co-supervision with Gopalan Balachandran. To be completed in 2026.
- Ephrussi, Alexander. ANSO, co-supervision with Alessandro Monsutti. To be completed in 2025.
- Hassoun, Munia. ANSO. To be completed in 2029.
- Malahayati, Mentari Binar. ANSO. To be completed in 2028.

#### **PhD Second Reader/Committee Members (5 students)**

- Lefort, Theo. ANSO.
- Rizk, Anthony. ANSO. Defended.
- Ruud, Sonja. ANSO. Defended.
- Smith, Robin Dean. ANSO.
- Wirtz, Gina Marcela. ANSO.

#### **MA Supervision (21 Students)**

2025 Azai, Yukisato. MINT  
 2025 Balkas, Esra. MINT  
 2025 Merin, Shruti Lal. ANSO  
 2025 Munjoz Rojas, Amalia. MINT  
 2025 O'Reilley, Ella. MINT  
 2025 Pae, Anna-Kristiina. ANSO  
 2025 Treviño Illsley, José Luis. MINT

2024 Barsak, Fatih. MINT  
 2024 Belyshkina, Aglaya. MINT  
 2024 El Alaoui Talibi, Asmaa. MINT  
 2024 Luvisotto, Eva Leona. MINT  
 2024 Molina, Karla Sofia Aravina. ANSO  
 2024 Motte, Bertille Cécile Ghislaine. ANSO  
 2024 Özçelikel, Melisa Elçin. ANSO  
 2024 Parakh, Poorvi. MINT  
 2024 Sánchez, Adriana M. Ramírez. MINT  
 2024 Seven, Mete. MINT  
 2024 Taylor, Lil. MINT

2023 Futuro, Carolina Miranda. Master in International Relations and Political Science (IRPS), Co-supervision with Anna Leander, Global Migration Center, Best MA dissertation on Migration.  
 2023 Le Vaslot, Agathe. MINT. Prix de l'Association Genève-Asie. Best MA dissertation.  
 2023 Roth, Savannah Page. Joint degree (BA/MA) program with the Graduate Institute

#### **MA Second reader (15)**

2025 Bagaria Aanchal. MINT  
 2025 Bog, Ana. ANSO  
 2025 Kumar, Shivam. MINT  
 2025 Kandula, Archit. MINT  
 2025 Rami, Alexandre Mottu. MINT.

2024 Aspen, Bennett Hailey. MINT  
 2024 Bismann, Johanna. ANSO  
 2024 Lazzaroni Andina, Matilde. ANSO

2024 Malahayati, Mentari Binar. ANSO  
2024 Manu, Merab Vilomina. ANSO

2023 Favour, Imhomoh, MINT  
2023 Granados Jaramillo, Paola Andrea. MINT  
2023 Hosseinalipour, Seyed-Moeen. MIA  
2023 Javaid, Mohammad. ANSO  
2023 Yoojin Have, Jasmine. ANSO

2018 Project consultant for “Infrastructure Space and the Future of Migration Management: The EU Hotspots in the Mediterranean Borderscape,” University of Basel, Switzerland.

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## RESEARCH INTERESTS

Environmental Pollution across the Sea of Marmara, *ongoing*  
Transnational Fishing and Maritime Sovereignty, *ongoing*

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## EXTERNAL EXAMINER FOR A PHD DISSERTATION

April 14, 2024. Ilkim Karakus, “Street Politics in Istanbul: Thresholds of Dissent, Endurance, and Agency,” Harvard University, Department of Anthropology.

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## ACADEMIC SERVICE

### Funding and Fellowship Reviewer for:

SNFS Division 1; National Science Center, Poland; sowi:docs Fellowship Programme, Austria.

### Book Reviewer for:

Routledge; University of Pennsylvania Press.

### Article Reviewer for:

American Ethnologist; Cultural Anthropology; Current Anthropology; European Feminist Studies; Journal of Anthropology of the Contemporary Middle East and Central Asia; Journal of Royal Anthropological Institute; Social Anthropology.

### Fall 2024–Spring 2025

Co-organizer of Anthropology & Sociology Departmental Seminars with Minhua Ling.  
ANSO Dissertation Prize Committee  
Reviewer for MA applications, ANSO  
Reviewer for PhD applications, ANSO  
Commentator for student papers, in CUSO Gender Reproduction in the Contemporary World: Gender, Kinship, Governance and Technologies. Geneva Graduate Institute. November 1 and 2 2024.

### Fall 2023–Spring 2024

Co-organizer of Anthropology & Sociology Departmental Seminars with Graziella Moraes Dias da Silva  
ANSO Dissertation Prize Committee  
Reviewer for MA applications, ANSO  
Reviewer for PhD applications, ANSO

Commentator for Gender Center workshop. Nivedita Joon’s paper on “Testimonies to Global Sisterhood: Anti-Institutional Feminist Politics at the International Tribunal on Crimes Against Women, 1976.”

## **Fall 2022**

Reviewer for PhD applications, ANSO

## **ORGANIZATION OF MEETINGS**

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June 27–29, 2024

Research consultant and co-curator with Odessa Warren, Angelina Radakovic, Siegrun Salmanian, Reem Shadid. Art programme, “War-torn Ecologies, Resistant Worlds,” the Mosaic Rooms, UK.

November 9–13, 2022

Panel organizer, Executive Panel, “Occupied Ecologies: Politics of War and Life in the Middle East,” Conference, American Anthropological Association (AAA) Meetings, Seattle, USA.

Discussant: Eleana Kim. Paper presented: “Resistant Breathing on the Shores of Tigris River.”

November 14–18, 2019

Panel co-organizer, “Eco-Redaction in a Middle Eastern Natural Heritage Site” in “ Militarized Ecologies in the Middle East,” Conference, American Anthropological Association (AAA) Meetings, Vancouver, Canada. Discussant: Derek Gregory.

July 1, 2019

Workshop organizer, “Affective Ecologies, Ethnographic Fragments: Documenting Militarized Worlds,” Institute for Cultural Inquiry, Berlin, Germany. Discussant: Françoise Vergès. Paper presented: “Mulberry Affects: Genocidal Aftermaths and An-archic Aesthetics on the Shores of Tigris River in Upper Mesopotamia.”

November 14–17, 2018

Panel co-organizer, “Affective Ecologies,” Conference, American Anthropological Association (AAA) Meetings, San Jose, USA. Discussant: Marisol de la Cadena. Paper presented: “Breathing as Praxis.”

May 9–10, 2014

Panel organizer, “Dematerialization, Trauma, and the Politics of Bare Life,” the Society for Cultural Anthropology (SCA) Biennial Meeting, Detroit, USA. Discussant: Kath Weston. Paper presented: “Displacement and War-Trauma in a City under Blockade.”

November 20–24, 2013

Panel co-organizer, “The Affects of Activism,” Conference, American Anthropological Association (AAA) Meetings, Chicago, USA. Discussant: Ann Allison. Paper presented: “Spaced-Out Acts: Trauma, Displacement and Humanitarian Rehabilitation.”

November 16–20, 2011

Panel co-organizer, Executive Panel, “Affects of Displacement,” With Professor Yael Navaro, Conference, American Anthropological Association (AAA) Meetings, Montreal, Canada. Discussant: Liisa H. Malkki. Paper presented: “Dissonant Affects of Feminism.”

## **INVITED TALKS, SEMINARS, and KEYNOTE SPEECHES SINCE 2022**

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20 September, 2025

Panel discussion with Mahmoud Alhaj, moderated by Dr Marianna Liosi, “On Digital Memory, Ecocides and Landscapes’ Traumas,” in *Techno-Ökologien und erinnernde Materie: Die umkämpfte Umwelt*, Kunstraum Kreuzberg, Berlin, Germany.

8 July, 2025

Commentator, Seminar III · Thinking with the Elements: Ecologies of Excess and Resistance, in Arab Urbanism, Thinking with the Elements, University of Cambridge, UK.

4 May, 2025,

Presenter, “Dut Tetikler,” The Art Collective Yıkıntılar Arasında Araştırma ve Sanat İnisiyatifi (Research and Art Initiative Among the Ruins) at the SAHA Art Studio in Istanbul.

29 April, 2025

Senior seminar, “Mulberry Affects: Mass Violence and Ecology in the Trail of the Genocide,” In Ecologies and the Living in Crises and Wars—Arab Contemporary Societies and Muslim Worlds, EHESS, Paris, France.

15 April, 2025,

Senior seminar, “Decolonial Ecologies,” ANSO Conversations, The Graduate Institute of Geneva, Switzerland.

17 February, 2025

Discussant, “Thinking Far-right Movements Globally: on Banning Gender and the Rise of Anti-Wokery. A workshop with Prof. Nadjé Al-Ali, Brown University.” University of Lausanne, Switzerland.

26 February, 2025

Discussant, Panel on “Climatic and Biospheric Crisis,” in Symposium Ear-Witness: Listening to Violence, Migration, Climate, HEAD-Genève, Switzerland.

7 February, 2025

Keynote, “War-torn Ecologies,” in Learning with Mountains: Recalibrating How We Understand Art and Planet conference, (Celadon Center for Arts & Ecologies, Nicosia/Kapedes, Cyprus, 5-8 Feb 2025).

October 25, 2024

Roundtable talk, “Feminist Approaches to Political Violence,” The Annual Meeting of the Swiss Association of Gender Studies (SAGS), Neuchatel, Switzerland.

16–20 July, 2024

Seminar on “Environmental Humanities, Anthropology, and Mass Violence.” Summer School at the National University of Architecture, Yerevan, Armenia.

18 July, 2024

Seminar on “Ecology and Immobility.” Summer School on Migration and Refugee Studies. Harvard University and the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens.

June 28, 2024

Conversation with Gascia Ouzounian, “Mulberry Affects and Sonic Memories of the Armenian genocide”, Art program, “War-torn Ecologies, Resistant Worlds.” Co-curator with Odessa Warren, Angelina Radakovic, Siegrun Salmanian, Reem Shadid, the Mosaic Rooms, UK.



June 27, 2024

Keynote speech, “War-torn Ecologies”, with Françoise Vergès, moderated by Odessa Warren. Co-curator with Odessa Warren, Angelina Radakovic, Siegrun Salmanian, Reem Shadid, the Mosaic Rooms, UK.

May 15, 2024

Panel talk. “Mulberry Affects: Ecology, Memory, and Aesthetics on the Shores of the Tigris River.” GE–HETS, INTERMIGRA–LAB, Geneva Graduate Institute and the School of Social Work Geneva, University of Geneva, Geneva, Switzerland.

May 7, 2024

Senior seminar, “Resistant Breathing: Ruined and Decolonial Ecologies in a Middle Eastern Heritage Site,” Department of Anthropology, University of Bern, Bern, Switzerland.

June 26–27, 2023

Panel talk, “Resistant Breathing: Ruined and Decolonial Ecologies in a Middle Eastern Heritage Site” in More-than-Human Memory Conference, the Center for Research in the Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences (CRASSH), the University of Cambridge.

June 7, 2023

Podcast talk, [Turkish], ““Eko-redaksiyon” ya da Doğa Siyasi Şiddete Dair Neler Söyler”, KIRIK Online, Istanbul, Turkey.

July 26–29, 2022

Panel talk, “Resistant Roots: Race, Decoloniality, and Ecology on the Shores of Tigris River” in “What Happens to Race when the Empire Crumbles?” 17th EASA Biennial Conference EASA2022: Transformation, Hope and the Commons. School of History, Anthropology, Philosophy and Politics at Queen’s University Belfast, Ireland.

May 26, 2022

Senior seminar, “Breathing under Blockade: Ruined and Decolonial Ecologies in a Middle Eastern Heritage Site,” Department of Anthropology, UCLA.

May 20, 2022

Podcast talk [Turkish], “Dutlu Haller” in Maddenin hafızası. 2.11 Adalet Atlası.

April 2013, 2022

Panel talk, “Resistant Rooting: Ecology in the Wake of the Armenian Genocide” in “Idioms of Resistance,” Center for Near Eastern Studies, UCLA.

April 4, 2022

Panel talk, “Urban Agriculture under Low Intensity War” in “State Control in Turkey: Resistant Encounters in War and Peace.” MENA Studies Program and the Keyman Modern Turkish Studies Program, Northwestern University, USA.

## LANGUAGES

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Turkish (Native)

English (Fluent)

French (B2)

Italian (B1)

Greek (A1.2)