

# MERT KOÇAK

PhD Candidate  
Department of Sociology and Social Anthropology  
Central European University  
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## Education

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- 2016- ongoing      Central European University, Budapest  
PhD Candidate in Sociology and Social Anthropology  
Supervisors: Assoc. Prof. Dorit Geva and Prof. Ayşe Çağlar  
Thesis Title: Migration Industries and Transnational Governance of Queer Migration:  
NGOization, Projectification and Bureaucratization of Sexuality and Gender in  
Turkey
- 2015- 2016      Central European University, Budapest  
MA in Gender Studies  
Supervisor: Prof. Andrea Peto
- 2013- 2014      London School of Economics and Political Science, London  
MSc in Human Rights
- 2007- 2013      Bogaziçi University, Istanbul  
BA in Political Science and International Relations

## Non-degree Education

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- Oct. 2020 – ongoing      French Research Center in Humanities and Social Sciences (CEFRES), Prague  
Associated PhD student
- Oct. 2020 – ongoing      University of Vienna  
Scholar Affiliate at the Europe-Asia Forced Migration Research Platform
- Oct. 2020 – Nov. 2020      The Institute for Human Sciences (IWM), Vienna  
Forced Migration Research Fellowship
- Oct. 2019 – July 2020      New Europe College, Bucharest  
Pontica Magna fellowship sponsored by the VolkswagenStiftung
- Sep. 2018 – Apr. 2019      Central European University, Budapest  
Center for Teaching and Learning  
CTL Program for Excellence in Teaching in Higher Education for Doctoral  
Students
- March 2018      Association for Migration Research, Istanbul  
Certificate program for “Research Methods and Ethics in Migration Studies”

## Areas of Specialization

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Transnational migration studies, refugee studies, migration industries, NGOization of migration, anthropology of policy, law and bureaucracy, queer migration studies, queer refugees, and legalization and bureaucratization of gender.

## Fieldworks:

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- Sep. 2017 – Dec. 2020      23-month long multi-cited ethnography in four cities of Turkey (Istanbul, Ankara, Eskişehir and Yalova) for PhD thesis and interviews with 116 informants; 57 of whom are workers of non-governmental organizations and transnational organizations, 59 of whom are queer refugees
- Apr. 2016 – Mar. 2016      Interviews with 13 informants including trans activists and sex workers for MA thesis

## Refereed Articles

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Kocak, M. (2020). Who is “Queerer” and Deserves Resettlement?: Queer Asylum Seekers and Their Deservingness of Refugee Status in Turkey. *Middle East Critique*, 29(1), 29-46. DOI: 10.1080/19436149.2020.1704506

Kocak, M. (2016). Gendering Mourning in the image of Anne Frank. *Kaleidoscope: Journal on the History of Culture, Science and Medicine*, 7(13), 542-551. DOI:10.17107/KH.2016.13.542-551

## Book Chapters

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Kocak, M. (2020). Türkiye’ye Göç Eden Kimlikler: Yerel ve Ulusaşırı Dinamiklerin Kesişiminde LGBT Mülteciliğin İnşası (Identities that Migrate to Turkey: Construction of LGBT Refugeeness at the Intersection of Local and Transnational Dynamics). In K. Biehl & D. Daniş (Eds.), *Toplumsal Cinsiyet Perspektifinden Türkiye’de Göç Araştırmaları (Migration Studies in Turkey from the Perspective of Gender)* (pp. 164-191). Sabancı University and Association for Migration Studies.

## Teaching Experience

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- Feb. 2021 – Ongoing      Central European University, Vienna  
Teaching Assistant for Decolonizing Gender Studies
- Oct. 2020 – Feb. 2021      Bahçeşehir University, Istanbul  
Visiting Lecturer for Introduction to Medical Sociology
- Oct. 2020 – Nov. 2020      Association for Migration Studies: Academia, Istanbul  
Lecturer for a one-month long course Gender and Migration
- Apr. 2019 – June 2019      Central European University, Budapest  
Teaching Assistant for the Roma Graduate Preparation Program - Online Course

Sep. 2018 – Jan. 2019	Central European University, Budapest Teaching Assistant for Key Issues in Sociological Theory
Sep. 2014 – June 2015	Sabancı University, Istanbul Teaching Assistant for Humanity and Society I and II
Sep. 2013 – June 2013	Bogaziçi University, Istanbul Student Assistant for History of Political Thought I and II
Sep. 2012 – Jan. 2013	Bogaziçi University, Istanbul Student Assistant for Comparative Politics

## Research Experience

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Sep. 2020 – Feb. 2021	Independent Research “Migration, environment, and gender in Turkey” by Dr. Kristen Biehl (Sabanci University, Istanbul) Research Assistant for supported by Raoul Wallenberg Institute
Apr. 2020 – Aug. 2020	Association for Monitoring Gender Equality, Istanbul Research Assistant for the report “Migration and Gender Equality”
July 2013 – Oct. 2013	Bogaziçi University, Istanbul Research Assistant in the Social Policy Forum for the Project “Identity in Turkey, Kurdish Question and Reconciliation Process: Perceptions and Positions”

## Honors and Awards

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2019- 2020	Central European University, Budapest Award for Advanced Doctoral Students
2019	Central European University, Budapest Field and Archival Research Grant (2000 EUR)
2018	Raoul Wallenberg Institute, Lund Research Grant for Human Rights (2500 EUR)
2017- 2018	Central European University, Budapest Academic Achievement Award for First-Year Doctoral Students
2017- 2018	Central European University, Budapest Field Support Grant (2000 EUR)
2016- 2019	Central European University, Budapest Doctoral Scholarship
2015- 2016	Central European University, Budapest Master’s Scholarship
2013- 2014	London School of Economics and Political Science, London Master’s Award (29,000 GBP)

## Invited Talks

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- March 2021 “Gender and Migration in Turkey”, seminar presentation at Community Volunteers Foundation, Turkey.
- Feb. 2021 “Gender and Migration”, paper presented at the gender equality workshop organized by Sabancı University, Turkey.
- Dec. 2020 “Prove Your Gender-Based Persecution: Gender and Asylum in Turkey”, seminar presentation at Social Sciences University of Ankara, Turkey.
- Dec. 2020 “Gendered Approaches to Migration”, seminar presentation at Hrant Dink Foundation, Turkey.
- March 2020 “Gender and Migration: Refugee Children”, seminar presentation at Sabancı University, Turkey
- Feb. 2020 “Transnational Construction of LGBTIQ Refugeeess in Turkey: UNHCR as the Agent ‘Legalizing’ Sexuality and Gender Identity”, seminar paper presented at European University Institute, Italy.
- Feb. 2020 “Gender and Migration: Vulnerable Refugees”, paper presented at the gender equality workshop organized by Sabancı University, Turkey.
- Sep. 2019 “Construction of ‘LGBT’ refugeeess in Turkey: Local LGBT Movement’s Role in Transnational Migration Governance”, paper presented at the panel “Workshop on Migration and Gender” organized by Kırkayak Center for Migration and Cultural Studies, Turkey.
- Nov. 2018 Presenter in the MA and PhD workshop for “Making the Modern Political Subject” in the Department of Gender Studies, Central European University, Hungary.
- Oct. 2018 Co-presenter with Dr. Heather Tucker in the MA and PhD workshop for “Feminist Qualitative Methods” in the Department of Gender Studies, Central European University, Hungary.

## Conference Participation

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- Nov. 2020 “Migration Industries and Transnational Governance of Queer Migration in Turkey”, paper presentation at “Fifth Annual Research and Orientation Workshop on Global Protection of Migrants and Refugees” organized by Mahanirban Calcutta Research group, India.
- Nov. 2020 "Deservingness as a Means of Transnational Governance of Displacement, Sexuality and Gender Identity: Queer Refugees in Turkey", seminar presentation organized by French Research Center in Humanities and Social Sciences, Czech Republic.
- June 2020 “NGOization and Projectification of Migration Governmentality: Queer Refugees in Turkey”, paper presentation at Online Conversations 2020 organized by Council of European Studies, Gender and Sexuality Research Network.
- Sep. 2019 “Confessing Your Effeminacy to the Turkish Armed Forces: Bureaucratization of Masculinity in Turkey”, paper presented at “2nd International Symposium on Men and

Masculinities” organized by Raoul Wallenberg Institute, Research Worldwide Istanbul, ICSM, and Ozyegin University, Turkey.

- June 2019 “LGBTIQ+ Organizations as Public Actors in Managing Migration Flows in Turkey”, paper presented at the panel “Gender Perspectives and Sexual Orientation in Migratory Studies” organized by the 7<sup>th</sup> Congress of the Portuguese Anthropological Association, Portugal.
- May 2019 “Everybody wants a piece of the cake”: NGOization and Projectification of LGBTIQ+ Civil Society in Turkey”, paper presented at the conference “Turkey’s Queer Times: Three Decades of LGBTQ+ Struggles in a Muslim Society” co-organized by University of Graz and Sabancı University, Turkey.
- May 2019 “Vulnerabilities Becoming Identities: The role of NGOs in Reproduction of ‘LGBT’ Refugeeess under the Category of Vulnerable Groups”, paper presented at the conference “Putting a Dent on the Mainstream: Our Bodies, Emotions, Diversities and Struggles” organized by Social Policies Gender Identity and Sexual Orientation Studies Association, Turkey.
- May 2019 “Identities That Migrate to Turkey: Construction of ‘LGBT’ Refugeeess at the Intersection of Transnational and Local Dynamics”, paper presented at the conference “Workshop on Migration Studies in Turkey Through Gender Perspective” co-organized by Sabancı University and Association for Migration Research, Turkey.
- May 2018 “Reshaping LGBTIQ+ movement in Turkey through Different Experiences of Intersectional Solidarity with Refugees”, paper presented at the conference “Bans and Contestations” organized by Social Policies Gender Identity and Sexual Orientation Studies Association, Turkey.
- May 2018 “(Im)possibility of Solidarity through Recognizing Intersecting Inequalities of Refugees and LGBT Individuals”, paper co-presented with Meriç Çağlar at the conference “In/equalities - Narrative & Critique, Resistance & Solidarity” organized by Central European University, Hungary.
- Sep. 2017 “Queer Necropolitics and Mobility: An Oral History of Trans Women’s Deaths in Turkey”, paper presented at the workshop “The Pasts, Presents, and Futures of Queer Mobilities: Transnational Movements of Ideas, Concepts, and People” organized by the European Network for Queer Anthropology, Hungary.
- Oct. 2016 “Heteronormativity of Death: Un-grievable and Non-Remembered Deaths of Trans Women in Turkey”, paper presented at the conference “Being LGBT in Turkey: Visibility, Resistance and Solidarity” organized by Social Policies Gender Identity and Sexual Orientation Studies Association, Turkey.

## Ad Hoc Journal Referee

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European Journal of Women’s Studies  
Middle East Critique  
Feral Feminisms

## Professional Activities

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- July 2018 Organizer of the event “Gender Equality Workshop for Syrian and Turkish Youth” at Association for Solidarity with Asylum Seekers and Migrants, Ankara, Turkey.
- June 2018 Organizer of the event “Tastes of the Neighboring Cultures” at Association for Solidarity with Asylum Seekers and Migrants, Ankara, Turkey.
- May 2018 Organizer of the event “Seeing Ankara Through the Eyes of Each Other: Photo Exhibition” at Association for Solidarity with Asylum Seekers and Migrants, Ankara, Turkey.
- Apr. 2018 Organizer of the event “Experiencing the History of Ankara Together and Seeing It Through the Eyes of Each Other” at Association for Solidarity with Asylum Seekers and Migrants, Ankara, Turkey.
- Sep. 2017 Co-organizer of the PhD conference “Teaching and Learning in Democracies under Threat: Production and Transmission of Knowledge in Changing Societies” at Central European University, Budapest, Hungary

## Languages

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Turkish (Native language)

English (Proficient)