

# Ecem Saricayir

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## EDUCATION

- 2024 Ph.D., History of Architecture and Urban Development, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY, USA  
Dissertation: Property in Transition: Architecture, Migration, and the Translation of Land Regimes in the Ottoman South Caucasus under the Russian Empire, 1877-1921  
Dissertation committee: Esra Akcan (chair), Mostafa Minawi, Lori Khatchadourian
- 2017 M.A., Art and Design, Kadir Has University, Istanbul, Turkey
- 2014 B.Arch., Istanbul Technical University, Istanbul, Turkey
- 2011-12 Exchange Program, Art and Architectural History, Brandenburg University of Technology, Cottbus, Germany

## ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

- 2025-26 Visiting Faculty, California College of the Arts
- 2023-25 Lecturer, University of California, Santa Cruz

## FELLOWSHIPS

- 2025-2026 Postdoctoral Researcher, European Research Council, Institute for Mediterranean Studies, Foundation for Research and Technology
- 2022-2023 International Dissertation Fellowship Award, Social Science Research Council
- 2021-2022 Visiting Doctoral Fellow, Berlin Graduate School of Muslim Communities and Societies, The Free University of Berlin
- 2020-2021 Graduate Research Fellowship, Institute for European Studies, Cornell University
- 2020 Doctoral Research Residency Fellowship, The Canadian Center for Architecture

## PUBLICATIONS

### *Peer-reviewed Journal Articles*

- “The Empire, Its Alternatives, and Architectural Historiography of the South Caucasus” (manuscript in preparation for submission to *JSAH*).
- “Architect of Nothingness: Frank van Klingeren’s Open Architecture,” *Footprint* 16, no: 2 (2022): 145–156.
- “‘Against the Privatised, the Preconditioned, and the Asylum-like:’ Frank van Klingeren’s Challenge to Open Architecture,” *The Journal of Architecture* 27, no:2 (2022): 202–224.

### Book Chapters

- “Building the ‘Russian’ South Caucasus” in *Handbook of the Modern History of the Caucasus*, eds. Stefan Kirmse and Naira Sahakyan (forthcoming with a university press).
- “Lost in Translation? Property and Empire-Building in the Russian South Caucasus,” in *Lines of Property*, eds. Claire Zimmerman, Peter Christensen, and Lisa Haber Thomson (University of Toronto Press, 2026).
- “Replacing Property: The Imperial Urban Development of Batum, 1878-1905,” in *Off-Center: Architectures of Russian and Soviet Imperialism*, eds. Markus Lähtenmäki and Da Hyung Jeong (Leuven University Press, 2026).
- “Calvino Travels to the East: Invisible Cities, Open Architecture, and Orientalism,” in *Italo Calvino’s Invisible Cities Around the World: Circulation, Translation and Reception Across Borders*, eds. Elio Baldi and Cecilia Schwartz (Routledge, 2024).
- “Homogenizing the Border: Kars after the Pogrom of 1955,” in *Art and Architecture of Migration and Discrimination: Turkey, Pakistan, and their European Diasporas*, eds. Esra Akcan and Iftikhar Dadi (Routledge, 2024).

### Online Articles

- “In the Scale of Nations,” *The Canadian Center for Architecture*, 2020,  
<https://www.cca.qc.ca/en/articles/86090/in-the-scale-of-a-boathouse-a-skyscraper-a-ruin>.

### Other Publications

- “Rehearsing the Border: Politics of Spatiality in Contemporary Artworks in Kars and Ani, Turkey,” in *Mediating the Spatiality of Conflicts*, eds. A. Pilav, M. Schoonderbeek, H. Sohn, and A. Stanicic (BK Books, 2020).
- “Postcolonial Quest II: Postcolonial Theories,” *Plate E\_18f* (2019): 32–35.
- “Intertwined Histories: Hybridity, Cosmopolitanism, Translation,” *Plate E\_18f* (2019): 40–43.
- “Bordering on Agoraphilia and Agoraphobia: Artistic Practices on Turkey’s Borderlands,” *Peer 5* (2018): 58–68 (co-authored).

### AWARDS AND GRANTS

2025	Convention Travel Grant, Association for Slavic, East European, and Eurasian Studies
2024	Dissertation Completion Fellowship, Cornell University Carter Manny Citation of Special Recognition, The Graham Foundation
2023	President’s Travel Grant, Cornell University Dostoyevsky Scholarship, Aspirantum Institute
2022	Global Ph.D. Research Award, Mario Einaudi Center for International Studies, Cornell University Davis Graduate Student Travel Grant, Association for Slavic, East European, and Eurasian Studies
2021	Sage Scholarship, Cornell University

- Melikian Center Award, Critical Languages Institute, The Melikian Center: Russian, Eurasian and East European Studies, Arizona State University
- Scott Opler Graduate Student Fellowship, Society of Architectural Historians
- 2020 Helen O. and Stephen Jacobs Award, Cornell University  
Graduate Reading Group Grant, Institute of Comparative Modernities, Cornell University  
Dissertation Proposal Development Program Award, Institute for European Studies, Cornell University
- 2019 Summer Research Laboratory, The Russian, East European, and Eurasian Center, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign  
Graduate School Travel Grant, Cornell University  
Graduate Reading Group Grant, Institute of Comparative Modernities, Cornell University  
Andrew Mellon Urbanism Fellowship, Cornell University
- 2018 A. Henry Detweiler Fellowship, Cornell University  
Robert D. and Bonnie G. MacDougall Memorial Award, Cornell University
- 2017 Sage Scholarship, Cornell University

## LECTURES AND TALKS

- 2026 “The Empire’s Map,” CCA Research Network: The Place of Research at New Haven, School of Architecture, Yale University, New Haven, January 23.
- 2025 “Roads, Railways, and States: An Architectural Introduction to Infrastructure,” Office of Resources for International and Area Studies Summer Institute, University of California, Berkeley, June 23.  
“Artistic and Literary Freedom and the Destruction of Culture, Education and Heritage in Times of Mass Atrocity,” The University of California Confronts Violence, Mass Atrocity and Hate: Conversations on Human Rights, Humanity and Peacemaking, University of California, Davis, February 28.  
“Architectural Histories of Property in Transition: From the Late Imperial South Caucasus Borderlands to Modern Turkey,” Research Centre for the Humanities, Athens, January 21.
- 2024 Institute of Slavic, Eastern European, and Eurasian Studies Field Workshop, University of California, Berkeley, November 8.
- 2022 “Open in Architecture,” University of Amsterdam, virtual, February 11.  
“Frank van Klingeren and Democratic Space,” University of Kassel, virtual, January 7.
- 2021 “Architecture, Identity, and the South Caucasus,” Caucasus Talks, virtual, June 14.  
“Alternative Imaginations of the South Caucasus at the Turn of the Century,” SYGMA, virtual, April 11.

## CONFERENCES

### *Conferences Organized*

- 2022 “Writing the History of the Built Environments of Asia: Materiality, Translations, and Colonialism” (co-organized), Cornell University, April 21-22.

*Panels Organized*

2025 “Architecture and Internationalism: Beyond the International Style” (co-organized), Society of Architectural Historians Annual Conference, Atlanta, GA, April 1-5.

*Papers Presented*

2025 “Housing Finance in Postwar Turkey: Foreign Aid Proposals, 1950-1960,” The Politics of Housing and Domesticity in the Post-WWII Eastern Mediterranean, Society of Architectural Historians Annual Conference, virtual, September 18-20.

2024 “From Migrants to Settlers: A Study of Russian Rural Development at the Borderlands,” Association for Slavic, Eastern European, and Eurasian Studies Annual Convention, Boston, MA, November 22-25.

2023 “Designing the Resort: Dachas, Gardens, and Boulevards in Batum(i) under the Russian Empire,” Association for Slavic, East European, and Eurasian Studies Annual Convention, Philadelphia, PA, November 30-December 3.

“Property, Migration, and Colonial Settlement in Kars and Batum,” Annual Meeting of Middle East Studies Association, Montreal, Quebec, Canada, November 11-15.

“Architectures of Transition: The New Armenian Architecture in the Early Soviet Union,” Institute of Archeology and Ethnography NAS Republic of Armenia and Armenian Research Center at the University of Michigan-Dearborn, “The Soviet Experience in Armenia and its Legacy-2,” Yerevan, Armenia, June 13-15.

2022 “Constructing Hygiene and Settling the Border: Russian Imperial Architecture in the Russo-Ottoman Borderlands,” Association for Slavic, East European, and Eurasian Studies Annual Convention, Chicago, IL, November 10-13.

“Discourses on Hygiene and Architecture in the Russo-Ottoman Borderlands,” Central New York Humanities Corridor, “Empire’s Province into National City: Architecture and the Dissolution of the Ottoman Empire,” virtual, March 12.

2021 “Experiments and Enemies of Openness: The Case of Frank van Klingeren and the Question of Authorship,” European Architectural History Network Annual Conference, virtual, June 2-5.

“Architecture in Transition: Imaginations of the South Caucasus at the Turn of the Century,” Society of Architectural Historians Annual Conference, virtual, April 13-17.

2019 “Open in Architecture: Its Experiments and Enemies—The Case of Frank van Klingeren (The Netherlands) and the Question of Authorship,” “Critically Now,” Cornell University, Ithaca, NY, November 11.

“Rehearsing the Border: Politics of Spatiality in Contemporary Artworks in Kars and Ani, Turkey,” “Mediating Spatiality of Conflicts,” TU Delft, Delft, the Netherlands, November 6-8.

2016 “On-looking from In-Between: Gezi Park in Istanbul,” The Annual Department of Art and Architecture Conference, College of Charleston, Charleston, NC, April 1-4.

### *Discussant*

- 2025 “Environment, Ecologies, and Toxicities,” Annual Meeting of Middle East Studies Association, Montreal, Quebec, Canada, November 22-25.
- 2024 “Migrant Domesticity,” Association for Slavic, East European, and Eurasian Studies Annual Convention, Boston, MA, November 22-25.
- 2023 *My Socialist Home* by Iulia Statica, Association for Slavic, East European, and Eurasian Studies Annual Convention, Boston, MA, November 22-25.

## **TEACHING EXPERIENCE**

### *California College of the Arts, Department of Architecture*

- “Architecture or Revolution?”: Intersection of Politics and Design (seminar, S2023 and F2025)
- Architectural Theory (lecture, co-taught, F2023 and F2025)
- History of Architecture II: From the Enlightenment to Postmodernism (lecture, F2025)
- History of Architecture I: From the Antiquity to Baroque (lecture, S2026)
- History of Architecture II: From the Enlightenment to Postmodernism (seminar, S2026)

### *University of California, Santa Cruz, Department of History of Art and Visual Culture*

- History of Modern Architecture (lecture, F2023)
- Introduction to Global Architecture (lecture, S2025)

### *Cornell University, Department of Architecture, Art, & Planning*

#### As Instructor of Record

- “Architecture or Revolution?”: Intersection of Politics and Design (seminar, F2022)

#### As TA

- Theories and Analyses of Architecture (F2019)
- History of Architecture II (S2019)
- History of Architecture I (F2018)

## **EXHIBITIONS**

- 2022 *Soil and Dung: Biotic Architectures in the Rural South Caucasus*, International Architecture Biennial Rotterdam, Rotterdam, the Netherlands.
- 2017 *Co-Action Device. I Rather Laugh*, BAK, basis voor actuele kunst, Utrecht, the Netherlands.

## **ACADEMIC SERVICE**

- 2025-26 Interim Director, History Theory Experiments, California College of the Arts
- 2024-26 Membership Committee, Society of Architectural Historians
- 2021-23 Advisory Board, Critical Ottoman and Post-Ottoman Studies, Cornell University

- 2020-23 Graduate Writing Tutor, English Language Support Office, John Knight Institute for Writing in the Disciplines, Cornell University
- 2020-22 Advisory Board, English Language Support Office, John Knight Institute for Writing in the Disciplines, Cornell University
- 2021 Manuscript Reviewer, *International Journal of Islamic Architecture*

## **PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE**

- 2019 Research Assistant, “Modern Art Histories in and across Africa, South, and Southeast Asia,” Getty Foundation; Asia Art Archive, Hong Kong; Dhaka Art Summit, Bangladesh, and Institute of Comparative Modernities, Cornell University
- 2014-15 Junior Architect, Ekol Projects, Istanbul, Turkey
- 2013-14 Editor, Arkitera Architecture Centre, Istanbul, Turkey
- 2013 Architect and Project Coordinator, Istanbul Foundation for Culture and Arts (IKSV), Istanbul, Turkey

## **LANGUAGES**

Turkish, English, Ottoman (intermediate in reading), Russian (intermediate in reading and speaking), German (intermediate in reading and speaking), Dutch (intermediate in reading and speaking), Armenian (beginner in reading and speaking)