

CEVAT DARGIN

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RESEARCH PROFILE

Historian of the modern Middle East examining how race, empire, environment, and technology intersect in shaping state formation and sovereignty from the late Ottoman Empire to the postwar world

EDUCATION

Princeton University Ph.D. in Middle Eastern Studies (Department of Near Eastern Studies)	2015–2021
New York University M.A. in Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies	2012–2014
City University of New York, Brooklyn College M.A. in Political Science	2010–2012
Boğaziçi University B.A. in Political Science and International Relations	2002–2007

LANGUAGE AND RESEARCH TRAINING:

Alliance Française, Paris, France Advanced French	Spring 2019
Middlebury Language Schools, Middlebury, VT Advanced Russian	Summer 2018
Derzhavin Institute, St. Petersburg, Russia Intermediate Russian	Summer 2017
Dehkhoda Institute, University of Tehran, Iran Advanced Persian	Summer 2016

ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

Norwich University Assistant Professor of Middle Eastern History, Department of History and Political Science	2025–Present
Columbia University Visiting Assistant Professor, Department of Middle Eastern, South Asian, and African Studies	2023–2024
University of Michigan in Ann Arbor Postdoctoral Fellow, Department of History	2022–2023
Princeton University Postgraduate Research Associate	Spring 2022

RESEARCH AND TEACHING AREAS

Technologies of warfare, Science and Technology Studies (STS), modern state formation, historical geography, race and ethnicity, environmental history, empire and colonialism, genocide and ethnic cleansing, nationalism and decolonization, minorities and Indigeneity, slavery, Islam, global and comparative history, and the ancient, medieval, and modern Middle East, North Africa, Balkans, Caucasus, Central Asia, Ottoman Empire, and Persia/Iran

BOOK PROJECTS

Ottoman Roads to Dersim '38: Engineering the Modern State in the Middle East

Under preparation. Based on multilingual archival research, this book examines how infrastructure, race, and environment intersected in the making of modern state power in Eastern Anatolia

The American Inquiry: Race and Empire in the Making of the Post-Ottoman Middle East

Second book project (in development)

PUBLICATIONS

Peer-Reviewed Articles

“Self-Determination for Whom? Race, Sovereignty, and the Kurds in the Post-World War I Settlements,” *Journal of Ottoman and Turkish Studies Association* (in development, special issue)

“The Rhetoric of Rebellion: Race and Empire in the Making of Dersim Massacre,” *American Historical Review* (under review)

“Anticipatory Historical Geographies of Violence: Imagining, Mapping and Integrating Dersim into the Ottoman Empire and the Turkish State, 1866–1939,” *Journal of Historical Geography* 81 (2023): 162–178

Book Chapters

“The State of the Kurdish Question since the End of the Ottoman Empire,” in *The I.B. Tauris Handbook of the Late Ottoman Empire: History and Legacy*, eds. Hans Lukas Kieser and Khatchig Mouradian (London: I.B. Tauris, 2025)

“Hayali İsyancılar: Türk ulus inşasında Alevi Kürtler” [Imagined Rebels: Alevi Kurds in Turkish Nation-Building], in *Kürtler ve Cumhuriyet* [The Kurds and the Republic], eds. Ayhan Işık, et al., 217–228 (Ankara: Dipnot, 2023)

“Osmanlı’dan Cumhuriyet’e bir ‘Eşkîyalık Efsanesi’: Koçan (Koçuşığı) Aşireti (1890–1938)” [“A Legend of Banditry” across Ottoman Empire and the Republic of Turkey: The Koçan (Koçuşığı) Tribe (1890–1938)], in *Şekâvet, Hiyânet, İsyân: Geç Osmanlı’dan Cumhuriyet’e Eşkîyalık* [Brigandage, Treachery, Rebellion: Banditry from the Late Ottoman Empire to the Republic of Turkey], eds. Yalçın Çakmak and Ahmet Özcan, 69–89 (Istanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2023)

Review Essays and Book Reviews

“Charting Transitions: Perspectives on the Late Ottoman Empire and Post-Ottoman Transformations,” (review essay under preparation)

Review of *Contributions to Zagrology: V. F. Minorsky and C. J. Edmonds Correspondence (192–1965)* by Gennady Kurin and Metin Atmaca. *Journal of Iranian Studies*. Forthcoming

Review of *Losing Istanbul: Arab–Ottoman Imperialists and the End of Empire*, by Mustafa Minawi, *Journal of Ottoman and Turkish Studies Association* 11, no. 1 (2024): 256–259.

Review of *Inventing the Berbers: History and Ideology in the Maghrib*, by Ramzi Rouighi, *Revue des mondes musulmans et de la Méditerranée*, 152 (2022): Online.

Public Scholarship and Op–Eds

“What Happens in Syria Does not Stay in Syria,” *Voices on Peace and War* (September 16, 2025)

“Precarious Alliances: Turkey, Israel, Öcalan, and the Kurds Amid Shifting Middle Eastern Geopolitics,” *Voices on Peace and War* (January 23, 2025)

“Turkish Elections, Kurdish Votes, and the Question of Race,” *Jadaliyya* (2023)

“Kimin için Self Determinasyon? Lozan Antlaşması, Kürt Sorunu ve Uluslararası Hukukta Irk Meselesi” [Self–Determination for Whom? The Treaty of Lausanne, the Kurdish Issue, and the Question of Race in International Law], *PolitikART*, 318 (2023): Online

“Why Does Televizyon Become Vizonte? Kurds and Orientalism from Within,” *Annual Review*, Hagop Kevorkian Center for Near Eastern Studies, New York University (2014), 19

“Turkey’s Shifting Foreign Policy Toward the Middle East and Its Relationship with Israel,” *Journal of Turkish Weekly*, December 23, 2011

“The Arab Spring and the Waves of Democracy,” *Journal of Turkish Weekly* September 22, 2011

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Conducted multilingual archival research in:

Turkey: Ottoman Imperial Archives (BOA), Republican Archives, Turkish General Staff Archives (ATASE), and Turkish Historical Society

France: Archives nationales, Archives diplomatiques, and Bibliothèque nationale de France

United Kingdom: The National Archives and Foreign Office Records

United States: National Archives and the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions Archives

Russia: Archive of the Foreign Policy of Imperial Russia and Institute of Oriental Studies, Russian Academy of Sciences

Iran: National Archives and Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs

LANGUAGES

English (fluent), Turkish (native), Kurdish (native), Russian (advanced), Persian (advanced), French (advanced), Ottoman Paleography (reading competency), Arabic (basic)

FELLOWSHIPS AND HONORS

Postdoctoral Fellowship , Department of History, University of Michigan in Ann Arbor	2021–2022
Research Grant , the National Association for Armenian Studies and Research	2022
Dean’s Dissertation Completion Fellowship , Princeton University	2021
Research Grant , American Research Institute in Turkey	2019
Research Fellowship , Donald and Mary Hyde Foundation Research Fellowship	2018
Language Study Grant , Princeton Institute for International and Regional Studies	2017
Research Grant , Department of Near Eastern Studies, Princeton University	2016
Language Study Grant , Mossavar–Rahmani Center for Iran and Persian Gulf Studies	2015

RECOGNITIONS AND SHORTLISTS

Finalist , Tenure–Track Position in the History of Science, Technology, and Environment in the Middle East and North Africa, Department of History, Carnegie Mellon University	2024
Semifinalist , Assistant Professor of Politics in the Modern Islamic World, Emory University	2024
Runner–up finalist , Assistant Professor in Armenian History, UC Berkeley	2024
Semifinalist , Postdoctoral Fellowship, Society of Fellows, USC	2023
Runner–up finalist , Teaching Professor, Department of History, University of Pittsburgh	2023
Finalist , Postdoctoral Associate, Program in Agrarian Studies, Yale University	2023
Offer declined , Postdoctoral Fellowship, Promise Armenian Institute, UCLA	2022
Finalist , Assistant Professor of Race and Ethnicity, Washington University in St. Louis	2022
Finalist , Lecturer on Modern History of Iran or Turkey, NELC, Harvard University	2021

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Norwich University

History of Technology and Warfare (envisioned for Fall 2026) — explores the relationship between technological innovation, military conflict, and state formation from antiquity to the present

Islam and Modern Politics (upcoming, Spring 2026) — examines Islamic thought and movements in relation to modernity, colonialism, and political power

Israel and Palestine: Past and Present (upcoming, Spring 2026) — traces the historical roots and contemporary dynamics of the Israeli–Palestinian conflict

History of the Middle East (Spring & Fall 2025) — survey of political, social, and environmental change from antiquity to the present

Introduction to International Studies (Spring & Fall 2025) — interdisciplinary overview of global systems, institutions, and transnational interactions

[Columbia University](#)

Armenians and the Modern World (Spring 2024) — transimperial histories of diaspora, genocide, and global Armenian experience

[University of Michigan in Ann Arbor](#)

Nations and Nationalism (Spring 2023) — theories of nation-building, identity, and belonging in comparative and global contexts

[Princeton University](#)

Undergraduate Research Mentorship 2021–2022

The Politics of Modern Islam (Assistant Instructor) Fall 2020

Minorities in the Middle East and North Africa (reading seminar) Fall 2017

Nations and Nationalism in the Middle East and Eurasia (reading seminar) Spring 2017

Teaching Certificate, McGraw Center for Teaching Spring 2016

WORKSHOP ORGANIZED

“Modern State and Internal Colonialism: Peoples, Places, and Power across Empire and Nation–State.” University of Michigan, Ann Arbor (2022). In collaboration with Melanie S. Tanielian, Hakem Al–Rustom, and Gottfried Hagen

INVITED TALKS

University of Chicago. “The Black Box of the Republic”: Dersim '38 and the Making of the Modern Turkish State. Zahra Institute (2025).

Stanford University. “Empire of Mountains: Environmental Racialization and Colonial Violence in the Late Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey.” Abbasi Program in Islamic Studies (2024)

New York University. “Roads to Civilization: Imagining, Mapping, and Integrating Dersim into the Ottoman Empire and the Turkish State.” Ottoman and Turkish Studies (2024)

University of California, Berkeley / University of California, Los Angeles. “Empire of Questions: The Late Ottoman Empire and Dersim '38.” (2024)

Harvard University. “Rebellion as Myth in State–Making and State–Evasion: The Case of Dersim across Ottoman Empire and the Republic of Turkey (1878–1938).” New Horizons in Kurdish History Lecture Series (2022)

University and the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor & Princeton University. “Race, Environment, and the Modern Middle East: A Historical Microanalysis.” (2022)

University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. “A Disease in the Lungs of Anatolia”: Politics of Reform and Modernization at the Intersection of Armenian, Kurdish, and Kizilbash Questions.” Center for Armenian Studies, (2022)

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

Yale University. “Race, Rhetoric, and Rebellion: Afterlives of Ottoman Collapse in the Making of Dersim '38.” Macmillan Center Council on Middle East Studies. Conference: The Long Twentieth Century of Kurds and Kurdistan (2024)

Oxford University. “The Orient of the Orientalized: The Kurdish Other at the Intersection of Western Orientalism and Ottoman Colonialism.” The Institute of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies. Conference: Orientalism and Western Travelers to the Levant before the First World War (2024)

Princeton University / University of Michigan. “Roadlessness: Ottoman Modernity Navigating Uncharted Territories.” Conference: 4th Annual Mid–Atlantic Ottomanist Workshop / Conference: 11th Workshop on Armenian and Turkish Scholarship (2023)

Middle Eastern Studies Association. “‘You are Real and Pure Turks!’: Racialization and Colonial Violence in the Middle East.” Annual Conference. Montreal, Canada (2023)

Northwestern University. “Self–Determination for Whom? The Treaty of Lausanne, the Question of Race, and the Politics of International Law.” Conference: The Afterlives of Lausanne (2023)

American Society for Environmental History. “A Boil in the Heart of Anatolia: Environmental Knowledge in the Making of Ottoman and Turkish Colonial Encounters.” Annual Meeting. Roundtable: Resisting Nature: European Imperial Projects and the Limits of Environmental Knowledge. Boston, MA (2023)

Heidelberg University / The Nordic Society for Middle Eastern Studies. “Ottoman Collapse or Absolute Sovereignty? The Dersim ‘Rebellion’ as Myth in State–Making and State–Evasion.” Conference: Diaspora and Indigeneity: Intersections of Modern Jewish, Kurdish, and Amazigh History Germany (2023) / Annual Meeting: The Middle East in Myth and Reality, Reykjavik, Iceland (2022)

Middle Eastern Studies Association / Social Science and History Association / Third Annual Mid–Atlantic Ottomanists Workshop. “Internal Colonialism in the Middle East: The Case of Dersim across Ottoman Empire and the Republic of Turkey (1877–1938).” Annual Conference. Denver, CO (2022) / Annual Conference. Session: Reverberations of Empire: Histories, Legacies & Lineages, Chicago, IL (2022) / Continuity and Change Throughout the Ottoman Longue Durée, University of Mary Washington, Fredericksburg, VA (2022)

Flanders Fields Museum, Ypres, Belgium. “The Kizilbash Kurds’ Dangerous Mission: Smuggling Armenian Genocide Survivors to Safety During World War I.” Conference: The First World War in the Middle East: Aftermath and Legacies (2022)

Hokkaido University, Sapporo, Japan. “The Middle East in Rebellion: Resistance to Nation–States and Colonial Administrations in the Aftermath of Ottoman Collapse (1918–1938).” Symposium: An Anarchist Turn? Imperial Rule and Resistance in the Long Twentieth Century (2022).

Islamic College, London. “Governing a Nonstate Space: Alevism in Theory and Practice.” Shai Studies Conference (2022)

Harvard University and College of William and Mary. “A Mobile and Invisible Religion: The Kizilbash Belief System in Practice.” Workshop: New Horizons in Alevi and Bektashi History (2022)

Institute of Orientalism of the Russian Academy of Sciences, Moscow, Russia. “Alî Şîr: A Kurdish Nationalist Poet and Warrior in the Early 20th Century.” Workshop: Kurdish Nationalism and Russian Imperial Projects (2019)

Northwestern University. “United Kingdom and the Kurds during World War I: A Critical Analysis of British Documentary Sources: 1914–1920.” Conference: Historical and Comparative Perspectives on Kurdish Politics. Buffett Institute (2016)

New York University. “Identity in the Ideology, Art, and Literature of Kurdish Intellectuals at the End(s) of the Ottoman Empire.” Workshop on identity politics (2015)

SELECTED PUBLIC ENGAGEMENTS

Podcast: “Osmanlı’dan Cumhuriyet’e Dersim’de Devlet İnşası” (State–Making in Dersim across Empire and Nation–State). *Kıymık*, podcast hosted by Yalçın Çakmak (2023)

Panel: “Turkey and Democracy at the Crossroads.” Panel organized by Writers for Democratic Action & Democracy Book Club. Moderated by Peter Balakian (2023)

Film Screening: “Zer: A film by Kazım Öz.” Q&A Coordinator, Princeton University (2018)

Panel: “A Voice from Syrian Kurdistan: The Civil War, Refugees, and Women.” Panel hosted by Liechtenstein Institute on Self–Determination, Princeton University (2017)

Panel: “Beyond the Arab Spring: Political (De)formation and Social Revolution in Rojava.” Panel hosted by Hagop Kevorkian Center for Near Eastern Studies, NYU (2015)

Public Programs and Outreach Assistant, Center for Near Eastern Studies, NYU (2013–2014)

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE (OUTSIDE ACADEMIA)

Research Assistant Intern, World Policy Institute, NYC	2011
Assistant Proposition Development Specialist, İş Bank Headquarters, Istanbul	2009
Military Service, Turkish Armed Forces	2008
CIEE, <i>Work and Travel Program</i> , Michigan, Colorado, and New York	2005–6–7

WORK AUTHORIZATION STATUS

Legally authorized for unrestricted and permanent employment in the United States and Turkey