



## Merve Tekgürler

- Ph.D. Student in History, admitted Autumn 2019
- Masters Student in Symbolic Systems, admitted Autumn 2023

### Bio

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#### BIO

Merve Tekgürler is a PhD candidate in History (ABD) and an M.S. student in Symbolic Systems. In AY 2023-24, they hold the inaugural Mellon/ACLS Dissertation Innovation Fellowship. Merve has a BA degree in History and Social and Cultural Anthropology from Freie University Berlin and an MA in History from Stanford.

Merve's dissertation, tentatively titled "Crucible of Empire: Danubian Borderlands and the Making of Ottoman Administrative Mentalities" focuses on the Ottoman-Polish borderlands in the long 18th century (1760s-1820s), examining the changes and continuities north of the Danube River in relation to Russian and Austrian expansions. They study Ottoman news and information networks in this region and their impact on production and mobilisation of imperial knowledge.

As part of their dissertation project, Merve is training a handwritten text recognition model for 18th century Ottoman Turkish administrative hand and developing AI-based natural language processing tools for Ottoman Turkish. Their aim is to compile a large machine-readable corpus of manuscript news communiques and employ computational text analysis methods. In AY 2022-23, they were a Digital Humanities Graduate Fellow at Center for Spatial and Textual Analysis (CESTA) with their project on topic modeling in Ottoman court histories from the 18th and 19th centuries.

Merve's research on the borderlands ties to their passion for maps and spatial humanities. They are the co-PI in Cistern: A Database of Geographical Knowledge in the Ottoman World, which they started with Adrien Zakar in Winter 2020. They also contributed to their advisor Ali Yaycıoğlu's Mapping Ottoman Epirus project, building a placenames dataset from an Ottoman transportation map and developing a 3D model of the late-nineteenth century Ottoman Empire with exaggerated elevation data.

Previously, Merve was a G.J. Pigott Scholar (AY 2022-23) and graduate coordinator of Stanford Humanities Center Eurasian Empires Workshop (AY 2021-22 & 2022-23). They also worked as senior graduate mentor for the Undergraduate Research Internship at CESTA from Spring 2021 to Fall 2022. Outside academia, Merve enjoys playing tennis, doing gymnastics, and all kinds of DIY projects.

#### HONORS AND AWARDS

- Dissertation Innovation Fellow, Mellon/ACLS (September 2023 - June 2024)
- G.J. Pigott Scholar, School of Humanities and Sciences (September 2022 - June 2023)

#### PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS AND ACTIVITIES

- Co-Convenor, The Alliance of Digital Humanities Organizations (ADHO) - Multilingual Digital Humanities Special Interest Group (2023 - present)

## EDUCATION AND CERTIFICATIONS

- MA, Stanford University , History (2021)
- BA, Freie University Berlin , History and Social and Cultural Anthropology (2018)

## Research & Scholarship

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### LAB AFFILIATIONS

- Mark Algee-Hewitt, Stanford Literary Lab (9/1/2022)

## Publications

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### PUBLICATIONS

- **“Cruel and Menacing Letter of Defiance”. A Study on the Perceptions of the Ottomans in Central Europe (1680s-1830s)**  
Tekgürler, M.  
Themenportal Europäische Geschichte.  
2023
- **Cistern: A Database of Geographical Knowledge in the Ottoman World.** *Journal of the Ottoman and Turkish Studies Association*  
Tekgürler, M.  
2022; 9 (2): 91-96