Proposal for the 3rd MMHN Conference

Kahraman Şakul, Dr

Military transportation as part of the Mediterranean Maritime Trade: Ottoman Freight Payments during the War of Second Coalition (1798-1802)

Transportation of the ammunition, supplies and the troops required a great deal of organizational capability especially in a naval expedition. Ottoman archives hosts many documents concerning the problems arose over the freight payments during the Russo-Ottoman naval expedition to the Ionian Islands (1798-1800) and the subsequent Ottoman naval expeditions to Egypt (1799-1802). While the topic has usually been left in oblivion, an analysis of the archival evidence provides fresh evidences to otherwise well-known decline of Muslim shipping in the Mediterranean. It, nevertheless, also brought to fore another dimension of diplomacy that has hitherto been totally ignored: how to handle the disputes on freight payments when the ship-owners are non-Ottoman subjects.

By the mid-eighteenth century the French ships –caravane- dominated the caravane maritime in French, or maritime caravanning (coastal shipping) between Ottoman ports. However, the Sublime Porte could not count on French shipping in military transportation when it was in war with France. Therefore, Ottoman military transportation during the War of Second Coalition was entrusted to Greek merchant ships whom usually sailed under the Russian flag –as Venice ceased to exist after 1797. As the Mediterranean suffered from embargoes in this period of war, Ottoman military transportation may have helped the Mediterranean maritime trade survive in various ways.

This presentation will therefore address the questions of the decline of the Muslim shipping and the reconfiguration of the Mediterranean maritime trade due to the Egyptian Expedition.
CV
Kahraman Şakul earned his Ph.D degree from Georgetown University (2009) with his doctoral dissertation “An Ottoman Global Moment: War of Second Coalition in the Levant.” His research interests include military and technological aspects of Ottoman reforms, social and economic history of the Morea as well as political culture of the Ottoman court in the transitional period of 1774-1826. He has contributed in the volume The Frontiers of the Ottoman World (Andrew Peacock [ed.], Oxford University Press, 2009) with the article titled “Ottoman Attempts to Control the Adriatic Frontier in the Napoleonic Wars.” His publications include several entries in Encyclopedia of the Ottoman Empire (Gábor Ágoston and Bruce Master [eds.], Facts on File Library of World History, 2008) and “General observations on the Ottoman military industry, 1774-1839: Problems of organization and standardization” in the forthcoming volume Adoption and Adaptation - The travel of methods, techniques and technologies between Asia and Europe and the transformations of know-how (Feza Günergun [ed.], Springer).