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Yusuf Ziya Karabiçak

American School of Classical Studies at Athens

“The Ottoman Counter Revolution: The Patriarchate of Constantinople and Governance in Ottoman Europe, 1768-1828”

(Η ομιλία θα πραγματοποιηθεί στα αγγλικά)

Discussants

Kostas Gavroglu

Emeritus Professor of History of Science, University of Athens

Eleni Gara

Associate Professor of Ottoman History, University of the Aegean

Lecturer's CV

Yusuf Ziya Karabiçak has completed his PhD thesis titled “Local Patriots and Ecumenical Ottomans: The Orthodox Patriarchate of Constantinople in the Ottoman Configuration of Power, 1768-1828” at McGill University and EHESS. He is a historian of the Ottoman Empire, focusing on questions of state formation, religion, diplomacy, patriotism, and revolution from an Ottoman (Muslim and Orthodox) perspective. He is currently a Senior Research Member at the American School of Classical Studies at Athens.

Summary

The Ottoman-Russian War of 1768-1774 made alternatives to Ottoman power visible to the inhabitants of Ottoman Europe. In addition to the complete domination of the Russian armies, the fact of Russian occupation, administration, or mere presence in parts of the empire from Moldavia and Wallachia to the Morea, from Montenegro to the Aegean Islands, made it possible to imagine new futures outside of the empire. Growing imperial rivalries that brought the Ottomans into conflict with the Russians, Austrians, French, and even the British, the constant state of war, and the spread of new ideologies forced the Ottoman government to seek solutions that would ensure the continuity of the empire in this age of revolutions.

This paper argues that the Patriarchate of Constantinople was the main instrument through which the Ottoman Empire attempted to control the growing challenges to its dominance. Ottoman ministers were aware of the danger of revolution throughout this period and their alliance with the Patriarchate shaped the Ottoman counterrevolution. Drawing on Ottoman Turkish and Greek sources, I will show the emergence of an alliance between the Sublime Porte and the Patriarchate with the common goal of containing local elites, revolutionary rhetoric, and the influence of rival empires.

