



46th Levantine Heritage Foundation Zoom lecture with guest speaker M. Emre Kılıçaslan
24 August 2026, 6.00 pm (UK time)

Western Land on Ottoman Shores: The Austrian Lloyd Steamship Company

Maritime transport has played a crucial role across every era of history. With the advent of steam navigation in the modern age, maintaining a reliable maritime shipping network became not merely a mark of great-power status, but a vital prerequisite for state survival.

This period also witnessed the rapid rise of the nation-state at the expense of traditional empires. Struggling against internal nationalist movements, multi-ethnic empires were forced to centralize—a process that depended fundamentally on robust, reliable networks of transportation and communication.

Founded in 1836 in the Austrian port city of Trieste, the **Austrian Lloyd Steam Navigation Company** (*Österreichischer Lloyd*) explicitly stated its primary mission in its founding charter: to establish regular steam-powered communication between Austrian ports and the Levantine East—forging a vital maritime connection between two ancient empires navigating the existential threats of modernity.

This study examines the founding and strategic objectives of Austrian Lloyd, tracing its operations along Ottoman coasts and its broader impact on Ottoman-Austrian diplomatic and economic relations. Furthermore, through the lens of Austrian Lloyd, this research explores how Western presence—operating as physical, legal, and extraterritorial extensions of Western “land” on Ottoman shores under the capitulations—was projected into and perceived within the Ottoman imagination.

Booking essential: <https://emre-kilicaslan-presentation.eventbrite.co.uk>

Contact: contact@levantineheritage.com



Promotion poster for the Austrian Lloyd Steamship Company.

M. Emre Kılıçaslan is an Associate Professor in the Department of History at Ordu University, specializing in maritime trade history, admiralty law, and Ottoman steamship operations. He earned his Ph.D. from Ondokuz Mayıs University, focusing his doctoral research on the Mediterranean and Levantine operations of the Austrian Lloyd Steam Navigation Company. He is the author of *Osmanlı Deniz Hukukunun Modernleşmesi* (*The Modernization of Ottoman Maritime Law*) and *Osmanlı Kıyılarındaki Batı: Avusturya Lloyd Buharlı Kumpanyası* (*The West on Ottoman Shores: The Austrian Lloyd Steamship Company*).

