

**Imperial Subjects and Social Commitment: An Endowment History from 1750 to 1918**

**Veranstalter:** Department of Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies, University of Vienna; Austrian Society of Modern Greek Studies  
**Datum, Ort:** 16.11.2016–18.11.2016, Vienna  
**Bericht von:** Lucia Waldschütz, Institut für Byzantinistik und Neogräzistik, Universität Wien

The international and interdisciplinary workshop „Imperial Subjects and Social Commitment: An Endowment History from 1750 to 1918“ was organized by Stefano Saracino, Nathalie Patricia Soursos and Maria A. Stassinopoulou from „Social Commitment in the Greek Communities of Vienna (18th–20th century),“ a research programme funded by the Austrian Science Fund, FWF (AP2714021, 2014–2017). It was dedicated to the emerging field of endowments and foundations throughout history with analytical approaches, themes and sources. The central goal of the workshop was to foster an understanding of European endowment history in the Early Modern and Modern era, especially by comparing the Habsburg and the Ottoman Empire.

MICHAEL BORGOLTE (Berlin) opened the workshop with a keynote lecture for a wide audience on the emergence and spreading of endowments in a universal historical perspective. He presented endowment history focusing on the historical conditions, which were necessary for endowments to appear and on regional differences due partly to different cultures of memoria and religious options of salvations. He also stressed the state's position in the course of foundations, since already in early times the good deed was expected to be followed by an act of recompense – a notion which has prevailed until modern times.

In her introduction to the workshop papers MARIA A. STASSINOPOULOU (Vienna) welcomed all speakers and dealt with the methodological challenge of bringing together the microhistory and comparative history. The case study of Greek-Orthodox as a small but distinct group in Vienna in an in-between space between empires, confessions,

administration and subjects offers a privileged position to develop new insights in the social and cultural practices related to endowment research.

Opening the first panel ZACHARY CHITWOOD (Mainz) discussed foundations of monasteries in Ottoman Greece, by analysing the typikon of the Athonite monastery of Stauroniketa. A „byzantine foundation in a post-byzantine world,“ the monastery was subjected directly and exclusively to the Patriarch of Constantinople. To make this foundation possible under Ottoman law, it therefore had been declared a „Byzantine re-foundation“ in its founding charter (typikon). Using the case of the monastery of Stauroniketa with its specific Athonite context Chitwood reflected on the influence of byzantine foundations on the Islamic legal system and vice versa on the influence of the Empire on monastic foundations.

SARAH PICHLKASTNER (Vienna) drew attention to endowments of the Vienna Civic Hospital before the reforms of Joseph II. During the Middle Ages the Civic Hospital was amongst the primary recipients of testamentary legacies and charitable endowments in the city of Vienna. In the Early Modern period the importance of endowments with charitable purposes compared to religious ones increased distinctly. Pichlkastner pointed out the difficulties of a differentiation between the categories of charitable and religious endowments and questioned the purpose and functionality of such a distinction.

At the beginning of the second panel TOMÁŠ MALÝ (Brno) elaborated on the significance of charity in the Habsburg Empire before 1800, taking Brno as an exemplary city. Based on earlier research on a wide sample of testaments the speaker sought to relate changes of social and religious structures of endowments with the intellectual discourse of the period. He emphasized that alms-giving was traditionally established within eschatological ideas and the *ars moriendi*. It was shown that the burghers' attitude towards the poor underwent dramatic changes and thus charity was revived in the 18th century. Malý put the recipients of endowments in a central position of his talk and posed questions about the definition of the „poor.“

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The history of the endowments of two „acatholic“ groups, the Greek-Orthodox and Protestant (both Lutheran and Calvinist) communities in the 18th century, was presented by STEFANO SARACINO (Vienna). Although the Greeks negotiated already before 1781 religious privileges in the Habsburg Empire, whereas the Protestants were allowed to exercise their religion only after the tolerance policy of Joseph II, both groups handled their endowments similarly. The lecture showed that the endowments established by members of the four communities were either founded for recipients in the region of origin of the founder, or directly for the benefit of the so called „acatholic“ communities of Vienna or for institutions within the Viennese welfare system administered by them.

KAYHAN ORBAY (Ankara) analysed imperial waqfs under the supervision of central officers in the Ottoman Empire. A single manager elected by the sultan administered each waqf, which constituted the most important charitable institutions founded by the ruling elite. The waqfs cumulated their income from rural estates. Preferably persons in need were employed in the waqfs and supplied with work, those unable to work were registered as eligible for support and could use the soup kitchens run by the waqfs. It was shown primarily that a waqf was a social foundation that offered food and financial help, but also took employing opportunities for the local population and precautionary measures for its employees' pensions.

GABRIELE SCHNEIDER (Vienna) emphasized the difficulty of a legal definition of endowments. She presented the prevailing juridical circumstances for endowments in Austria between 1750 and 1918, which weren't clearly defined in Austrian law despite early efforts under Maria Theresia. The establishing of a monitoring commission of endowments (the Stiftungshofkommission, 1750) led to improved control of founding developments. During the 19th century the Gemischte Bezirksämter and later the Bezirkshauptmannschaften, which combined legal and administrative competences, were entrusted with the handling of endowments. The paper provided also an outlook onto the late 20th century, which saw drastic changes in the provisions

for private endowments in the Austrian legal system.

DIMITRIS STAMATOPOULOS (Thessaloniki) continued with a paper on conflicts and the changing constellations among the Patriarchate, laic representatives of the rum millet, the legal heirs of founders of endowments, and the endowments' management in the Ottoman Empire. He based his presentation on two examples: the wills of Sarantis Archigenis and Christakis Zografos issued in the late 19th century, who both founded endowments in their wills that were contested by their descendants. In both cases the 1856 established Mixed Standing Millet-i Council, which possessed jurisdiction over „material“ questions as opposed to spiritual ones handled by the Holy Synod, objected the heirs' claims on the will. It thus favoured the community's rights over those of the individual. A point of conflict that was emphasized was the Patriarchate's defense of privileges against the claims of civil individualism.

Finally, NATHALIE PATRICIA SOURSOS (Vienna) reflected on the financial management of endowments, foundations, and donations within the two Greek communities of Vienna from 1850 until 1918. Based on financial reports and book keeping documents, she pointed out changes in the jurisdiction of the Habsburg state and its influence regarding the administration of endowments. Soursos suggested a parallel reading of external factors – economic crisis, legal regulations and wars – and their influence on the communities' internal organisations of their funds and endowments.

In the final round table various aspects of endowment research were brought together: MICHAEL BORGOLTE (Berlin) underlined the importance of case studies in moving towards a better understanding of the complexities of endowments as universal phenomenon; PETER EIGNER (Vienna) emphasized the importance of including the emergence of capitalist structures and the change of the bank system in discussing the change of foundations and endowments; RAOUL KNEUCKER (Vienna) accentuated the legal viewpoint and outlined a systemic perspective on charity; CLAUDIA RÖMER (Vienna) stressed the significance of the geographical

space as interconnected to the social space and of prosopography; MARIA A. STASSINOPOULOU (Vienna) drew attention to the importance of the migration for historical endowment research, as migrants saw in endowments an economic and social tool both of integration in the host society and of linkage of long duration to the society of origin.

A central theme that was considered during the whole workshop was the question of legal, conceptual, historical definition of endowments and foundations and of interrelated terminologies in a diachronic perspective. The hosting Vienna project was considered as a basis for a future communication platform.

**Conference overview:**

*Keynote Lecture:*

Michael Borgolte (Berlin): *Wie Neues in die Welt kommt. Zu Aufkommen und Verbreitung des Stiftungswesens in universalgeschichtlicher Perspektive*

Maria A. Stassinopoulou (Vienna): *Bringing the threads together: Micro-histories and comparative history*

*Panel 1: Practices and Narrations of Endowments in the Early Modern Period*

Zachary Chitwood (Mainz): *Founding Monasteries in Ottoman Greece. An Analysis of Post-Byzantine Monastic Charters (Ktetorika Typika)*

Sarah Pichlkastner (Vienna): *Foundations for the Viennese Civic Hospital and their Impact in the Early Modern Period*

*Panel 2: Administrative Laws and Semantics of Confession and Charity*

Tomáš Malý (Brno): *The Semantics of Charity: The Habsburg Empire before 1800*

Stefano Saracino (Vienna): *Acatholic Foundations: The Emergence of Charitable Endowments in the Greek and Protestant Communities of Vienna (18th Century)*

*Panel 3: Austrian Endowments – Ottoman Waqfs*

Kayhan Orbay (Ankara): *Imperial Waqfs within the Welfare System of the Ottoman Empire*

Gabriele Schneider (Vienna): *Austrian Law on Endowments between 1750 and 1918*

*Panel 4: After the Migration: The Economics of Philanthropy*

Dimitris Stamatopoulos (Thessaloniki): *Rum millet vs Heirs. Conflicts and Compromises on the Endowments' Management of the Ecumenical Patriarchate in the Late Ottoman Empire*

Nathalie Patricia Soursos (Vienna): *Financial Management of Donations, Foundations and Endowments in the Greek Communities of Vienna (1850–1918)*

*Round table – Perspectives for an Endowment History:*

Michael Borgolte (Berlin), Peter Eigner (Vienna), Raoul Kneucker (Vienna), Claudia Römer (Vienna), Maria A. Stassinopoulou (Vienna)

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