

Workshop

Urban Political Economy and Cadastre in Ottoman Empire and Eastern Europe in the 19th and Early 20th Centuries

27 - 28 May 2005, Centre Marc Bloch, Berlin

Generality and uniformity in the formulation and application of rules for social and economic conduct, overriding the local and particular privileges and vested interests, and in general, the penetration of the state into the daily lives of its subjects were the major thrusts of the transformation in the administrative practices of the 19th-century states. Generality and individuality in taxation and in the security of clearly delineated and enforced property rights all through the domains of the 19th-century states were embodied in the aims of and expectations from the 19th-century cadastre.

Surveying, recording, registering, mapping, whether of the land or of the town (although they may be ideologically and technically quite different), are deeply political acts, aimed at reshaping the relationship between the population and the landscape according to a grand plan devised by the state. In general, and primarily, property surveying in the 19th century involved a redefinition of rights to property. Historically speaking, this has always been a profoundly contentious and conflictual process. At the same time, surveying and registering property was at this time an attack on local privilege and an attempt at strengthening central authority. From this perspective, property surveying is not merely a technical/cartographic operation but one of the modern administrative practices of the 19th-century Ottoman state, which inescapably was immersed and entangled in local power relations, and embedded in the social and political institutions of the late Ottoman urban geography. The focus on the ways urban interest and urban actors in the 19th-century Ottoman towns were included or excluded, allowed to shape and negotiate the cadastre thus relates urban property to its wider context of the configuration of urban social and political structures. These latter include the reorganisation of the provincial administration of the empire throughout the century. For this new provincial administrative structure created and empowered new bodies of local government in the form of administrative and municipal councils, which played a central role in the way surveys -- urban and rural -- were carried out. If the initial assumption, that is that the urban administrative and social organizations, or rather the particular way urban interests were articulated, impeded and blocked, or reshaped by negotiation, the carrying out of urban property registration and the urban cadastre in the 19th-century Ottoman towns, then the question is why and in what ways?

The cadastre not only gave an intimate view of the local, it also aimed at reconstituting the local communities and property relations in the towns, overriding historical local particularities and privileges. Because the cadastre went deep into the pre-modern communal exemptions and vested privileges it was bound to create fierce opposition from the traditional communal leaders-cum-tax collectors, the religious establishment, or other urban elites. Yet it is important to draw a more nuanced and accurate picture of the local

power relations in the towns in order to see the local actors in the 19th century -- new and old -- and the changing balance of power within the towns: who were the local elites that were to be affected by the cadastre? The breakdown of the perennial category of the 'notable' into landowner, trader and industrialist -- irrespective of sect or denomination -- would perhaps help us understand the reaction to the cadastre and what sorts of interests were to be adversely affected by the survey and whether there were local elites who would have perhaps liked to have the surveying done. And of course how did the other city-dwellers react? It seems possible, through the study of property relations, to have a window on the local power relations in Ottoman towns, to distinguish between different actors in the townscape and their relationship to each other.

More specifically then, we will aim at understanding the changing political economy of eastern Mediterranean and European areas through the analysis of property surveying (cadastre) as a modern administrative management technique of the 19th-century state, in its broad social and political context. The latter includes the workings of the local commissions, administrative and municipal councils, and community organisations, as well as the social and material life of the urbanites, both those who were included and those excluded from these local organisations.

The aim is to inspire discussion and to produce a research agenda on issues of property surveying, territorial mapping and urban administration in the Ottoman empire as well as in eastern Europe in the 19th and early 20th centuries. The latter area not only encompasses some of the regions where Ottoman land and property surveying practices were implemented (for instance the cadastre in Bosnia) but also provides a potential comparative dimension especially with regard to the land reform and distribution practices in the early 1920s. One of the main aims of the workshop therefore is to probe possibilities of comparative analytical work in this context.

This workshop is part of the scholarly programme of the Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin's Working Group Modernity and Islam and is held in cooperation with the Institut d'Etudes de l'Islam et des Sociétés du Monde Musulman (IISMM) of the EHESS and the Centre Marc Bloch Berlin. It is scheduled to take place on Friday 27 and Saturday 28 May, 2005 at the Centre Marc Bloch in Berlin.

Convenors:

Yucel Terzibasoglu (Bogazici University, Istanbul; WIKO/AKMI, Berlin)
Alp Yucel Kaya (EHESS, Paris)

Program:

27 May 2005, Friday

9.30 –10.00

Yucel Terzibasoglu (Bogazici University, Istanbul; WIKO/AKMI, Berlin)
Opening Remarks

10.00-12.30

Alp Yucel Kaya (EHESS, Paris)

Political Economy of Registration of Property in a Port City: The Cadastre of Izmir, 1850-1854

Akis Papataxiarchis (Aegean University, Lesbos)

Notes on the Micro-History of a Tax ‘Revolt’ in early Tanzimat

12.30-14.30 Lunch

14.30-17.30

Denis Bocquet (CNRS-LATTS, Ecole nationale des Ponts et chaussées, Paris)

Methodological Issues in the Study of Cadastres in Urban History. A Survey of the European Historiography

Arnd Bauerkamper (BKVGE, Berlin)

Mental Mapping and the Quest for Spatial Domination in Europe in Comparison. A Research Agenda

Huricihan Islamoglu (Bogazici University, Istanbul; UCLA, Berkeley)

Politics of Administering Property - Statistics and Law

28 May 2005, Saturday

10.00-13.00

Nora Lafi (WIKO/AKMI, Berlin)

Municipalities in the Ottoman Empire: the new institutional Frame and the Development of Cadastres

Constantin Iordachi (CEU, Budapest; WIKO/AKMI, Berlin)

Land Property in the Transition from the Ottoman to Post-Ottoman Legal Systems: The Case of Dobrogea, 1878-1913

Dietmar Müller (FU, Berlin)

Land Law, Cadastre and Land Registers in Eastern Europe. 1918 - 1945 - 1989. Poland, Rumania and Yugoslavia in Comparison

13.00 Lunch

05/11/2012