

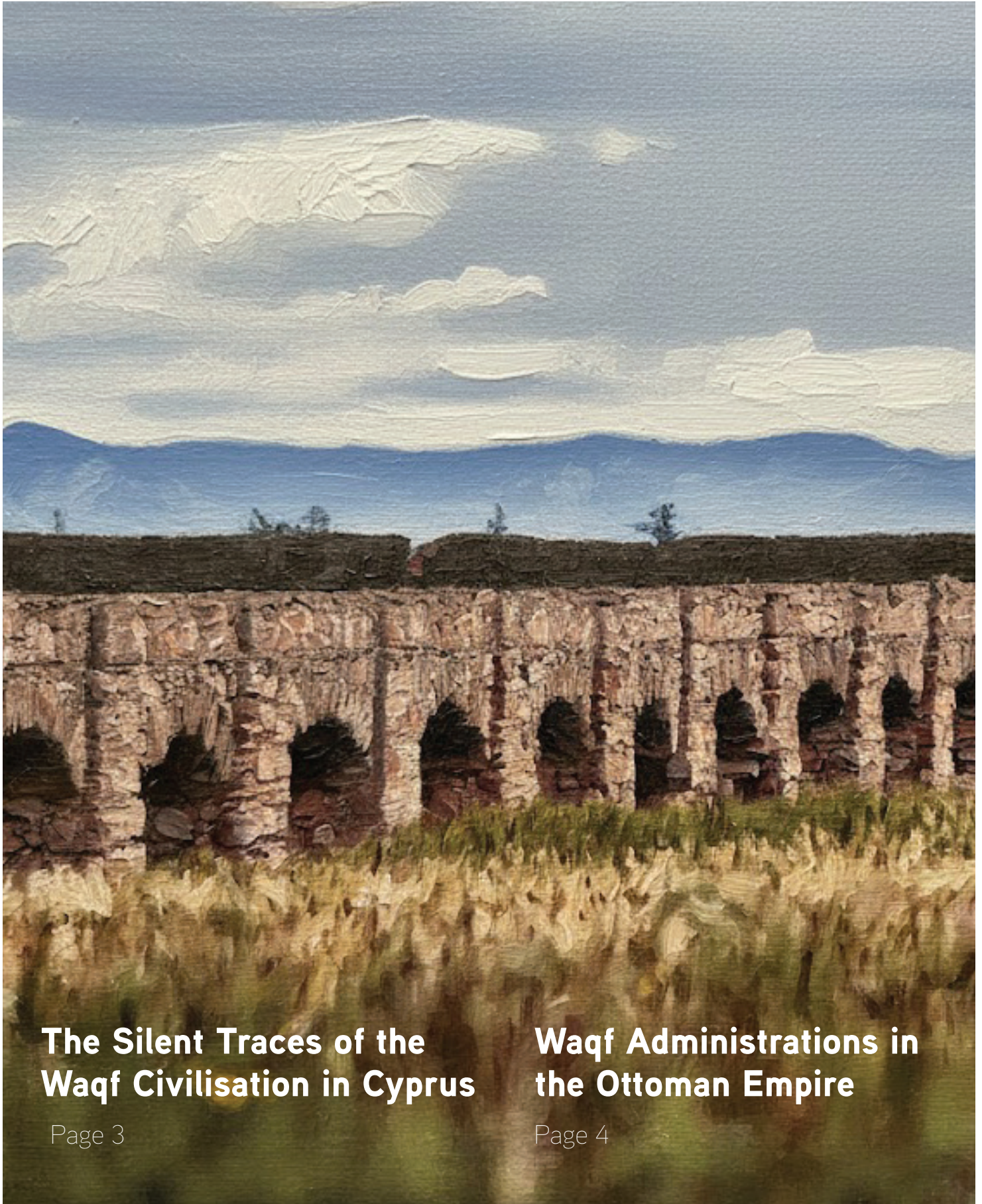


EVKAF

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"Your compassion will bring compassion."

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Evkaf Supports Palestine Solidarity Tent

The Palestine Solidarity Tent, established by the Cyprus Palestine Initiative in the Nicosia Terminal area, was set up to draw attention to the human rights violations suffered by the Palestinian people and to raise social awareness.

The Cyprus Evkaf Administration supported this

meaningful initiative and was present at the tent area with its Evkaf Goodness Volunteers team. The volunteers provided information to visitors about the humanitarian situation in Palestine.

In a declaration made by Evkaf, it was stated, "In accordance with our historical mission and

waqf culture, we have made it a principle to stand by the oppressed in every period. Supporting this tent, which was set up to draw attention to the injustices suffered by the Palestinian people and to raise public awareness, is a humanitarian and moral responsibility for us."



Evkaf Welcomed Students as Part of the Brotherhood Project

As part of the "Brotherhood Bridge from Victory Island to Victory City" project, led by the Afyonkarahisar Governor's Office and supported by the Ministry of Youth and Sports, a meaningful visit was made to the Cyprus Evkaf Administration.

Within the framework of the project, a group of students from Turkey met with their peers studying in the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus and visited Prof. Dr. Mustafa Tümer, General Manager of the Cyprus Evkaf Administration, at his office. Teachers, academics and writers also accompanied the visit. Prof. Dr. Tümer expressed his satisfaction with the visit, noting that such programmes enhance cultural interaction and solidarity among young people.

The Cyprus Evkaf Administration attaches importance to projects that strengthen young people's cultural ties and bring them together around shared history and values. In this regard, the continued growth of such collaborations and their enrichment with new opportunities is a valuable goal for the institution. The visit concluded with the exchange of gifts and commemorative photographs.



The Evkaf Goodness Volunteers Team Continues Its International Engagements

The Evkaf Goodness Volunteers Team recently held a meaningful meeting with officials from the Swedish Embassy.

During the meeting, information was provided about the social responsibility projects carried out by the Evkaf Goodness Volunteers Team to date, the activities they have organised for the benefit of the community, and the work they have done on a voluntary basis. The young volunteers shared their activities, particularly those aimed at supporting disadvantaged groups, environmental awareness projects, and activities contributing to education.

The Swedish Embassy officials expressed their satisfaction with these volunteer-based activities and emphasised the importance of such activities in enhancing social solidarity. The meeting also discussed possible collaborations and joint projects in the future.

Based on centuries of foundation culture, the Cyprus Evkaf Administration encourages the younger generation to act with social responsibility and continues to evaluate opportunities for international cooperation.

The Silent Traces of the Waqf Civilisation in Cyprus

Arif Pasha Aqueducts

Throughout history, the island of Cyprus has been a geography where access to water has been difficult. The most elegant solution to this need was the construction of aqueducts and arches built with the endowment concept. One such structure is the Arif Pasha Aqueducts, which rise today in the Mesarya Plain, around Gaziköy (Meriç). These aqueducts are not merely an infrastructure built to transport water; they are the embodiment of the waqf tradition's philosophy of "serving humanity," carved into stone.



Who was Arif Ata Bey?

Arif Ata Bey (Ataullah) was an Ottoman administrator who owned large agricultural lands in Cyprus. He chose to establish a water system that would benefit the community, considering not only his own lands but also the needs of the surrounding villages. In this way, he left behind a charitable work and contributed to the welfare of the island's people.

The Meeting of Engineering and Philanthropy

The arch system, built with the technical capabilities of the period, consists of a long water line. It is known to have approximately 60-70 arch openings. The arches rising from the ground allow the water to flow downhill.

The cut stone workmanship, the rhythmic arrangement of the arches, and the architecture in harmony with the surroundings make this structure not only functional but also an aesthetic Ottoman heritage.

The Impact of Waqf Culture on Society

Arif Pasha Aqueducts remind us of a truth. Waqf works are not just buildings, but structures that shape social life. Thanks to these arches: Agricultural production increased, villages developed, access to water became easier, and economic vitality came to the region.

This structure is not only an engineering success, but also a concrete example of kindness and sharing. It holds a special place as one of the local and unique waqf works in the history of the

island.

More Than Just a Stone Artifact

Today, these aqueducts remind us of the understanding of the past: "Water is life, and delivering water is charity." The Arif Pasha Aqueducts are a living example of this idea. This charitable structure, which stretches from the Ottoman era to the present day, demonstrates how the waqf breathed life into society through mosques, roads, bridges, aqueducts, inns and many other services.

The Arif Pasha Aqueducts are a waqf work that stands silently in Cyprus's historical memory but carries deep meaning. Recognising and preserving this heritage today means carrying the goodness of the past into the future.



The Development of Management in the Ottoman Empire

Waqf Management

In Ottoman society, waqfs were fundamental not only to religious and charitable services, but also to education, healthcare, public works and social solidarity. However, over time, the fragmented management of numerous waqfs belonging to sultans, members of the dynasty and state officials led to certain complications.

During the reign of Mahmud II, the Evkâf Nezâreti (Endowment Directorate) was established in 1826, marking the transition to a centralised system of endowment administration. Thus, for the first time, endowments were brought under a single umbrella. With this new system, endowments were classified into three main groups according to their management structure: Mazbut, Affiliated and Exceptional Waqfs.

Mazbut Waqfs

Waqfs directly administered by the Evkâf Nezâreti were called Mazbut Waqfs. This group had three subcategories:

Dynastic (Selâtin) Waqfs: These were waqfs established by Ottoman sultans and rulers, generally encompassing large charitable institutions such as mosques, soup kitchens, madrasas and hospitals. As the sultans could not be directly involved in the operation of these waqfs, the task of supervision was assigned to the grand vizier, the sheikh al-Islam or the palace aghas.

Waqfs Without Trustees: These were waqfs taken over by the Evkâf Nezâreti (Endowment Administration) because they had no administrator (trustee). This ensured that the waqfs continued to function without being left ownerless.

Endowments with Delegated Management: These were endowments whose trustees existed but whose management was delegated to the

Evkâf Nezâreti (Endowments Directorate) under a specific agreement. The trustees only received their salaries and did not interfere with the management.

The waqf of the Mazbut vakıf was laid in the 18th century with the establishment of the Evkâf-ı Hamidiyye Organisation by Abdulhamid I. Subsequently, during the reign of Mahmud II, the Laleli and Mahmudiyye waqf were also incorporated into this structure and became affiliated with the Evkâf-ı Hümayun Nezâret in 1826.

Affiliated Waqfs

Affiliated waqfs were those administered by their own trustees in accordance with their original charters.

These trustees were not subordinate to the Evkâf Nezâreti (Endowment Administration); instead, they acted according to the conditions set by the founder of the waqf. Such waqfs were usually established by charitable individuals who allocated portions of their personal property for benevolent purposes. These waqfs were also known as sahih (legitimate) waqfs, and since they were based on private ownership, they maintained their administrative autonomy. However, the state still retained the authority to supervise them when necessary.

Exceptional Waqfs

Waqfs that were outside the supervision of the Evkâf Nezâreti (Endowment Administration) and were managed entirely by their trustees were called Exceptional Waqfs. These waqfs were grouped into two categories:

Eizze Waqfs: These were waqfs established in the name of great Sufi masters. Among them were the waqfs of Abdulkadir Geylani (Baghdad), Mevlana Jalaluddin Rumi (Konya), Hacı Bektaş-ı Veli (Kırşehir) and Hacı Bayram-ı Veli (Ankara).

Guzzât Waqfs: These were waqfs established by veterans who had rendered great services in wars during the founding period of the Ottoman Empire. The waqfs of figures such as Gazi Evronos, Gazi Mihal, and Gazi Ali Bey belonged to this group.

During the Tanzimat period (mid-19th century), financial reforms led to the majority of waqf lands being placed under the control of the Ministry of Finance. However, this situation provoked a reaction, particularly from the trustees and those who lived off the waqf revenues, and some exceptional waqfs were exempted from state intervention.

With the enactment of the Law on the Closure of Tekkes and Zaviyes in 1925, most of these exempt waqfs were closed or transferred to the Ministry of National Education or the Waqf Administration, depending on their areas of activity. Thus, during the transition from the Ottoman Empire to the Republic, the waqf system acquired a modern structure.



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