



EVKAF

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"Your compassion will bring compassion."

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LIVES SHAPED BY WAQFS

The waqf culture, which bears the deep traces of Ottoman civilisation, attracts attention not only with its architecture but also with its unique philanthropic approach that weaves social solidarity thread by thread. This ancient tradition, stretching from centuries ago to the present day, has offered the most elegant ways to reach out to those in need in every area of life, to build the future, and to keep spiritual values alive.

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Mass Circumcision Event by Evkaf

The Cyprus Evkaf Administration (Evkaf) continued its tradition of supporting waqfs by organising a mass circumcision event for children in need this year. Conducted under the guidance of the Social Services Department, a total of 10 children underwent circumcision in hygienic conditions, accompanied by specialist doctors.

Following the circumcision operations, a celebration event was held in the garden of Cengiz Topel Hospital with the participation of the children and their families. During the event, gifts were distributed to the children and various fun activities were organised. The celebration was organised with the contributions of various institutions and volunteering supporters.

Projects Cultivating Hope to Our Seniors

The Cyprus Foundation Volunteers Team visited Sibel Tatar, wife of President Ersin Tatar. During the meeting, a new social responsibility project aimed at touching the lives of elderly individuals was discussed.

Volunteers providing information about the planned project for the elderly emphasised the importance of initiatives targeting the elderly, who constitute a valuable segment of society. It was stated that the project aims to contribute to the social lives of the elderly and provide them with the support they need. The visit concluded with an assessment of the steps to be taken within the scope of the project and a discussion of potential collaborations in the future.



Love Stray Animals, Respect Public Spaces!

Evkaf Volunteers for Goodness recently raised awareness in the community with a meaningful social responsibility event held in Girne, in the Sulu Çember area of Mete Adanır Street. During the event, food was provided for stray cats and dogs, while special hygiene bags were distributed to pet owners to strengthen environmental awareness.

The event drew attention to the struggle for survival faced by street animals, while also reminding pet owners of their responsibility to clean up animal waste in public areas.

Visit to Evkaf by YTB President Turus

Abdulahdi Turus, President of Turks Abroad and Related Communities (YTB), visited Prof. Dr. Mustafa Tümer, Director General of the Evkaf Administration, at his office. During the visit, information was exchanged about the work carried out by the Evkaf, and opportunities for cooperation between the two institutions were addressed. The meeting included an evaluation of joint projects that could be undertaken in the areas of preserving the foundation's heritage, education, culture and social affairs. Expressing his appreciation for the visit, Prof. Dr. Mustafa Tümer, Director General of Evkaf, said, "We are delighted to be working with YTB to preserve our shared values and pass them on to future generations."



A Tradition of Charity Established Through Education, Worship and Encouragement:

Hatice Hanım Hacı Mustafa Aga Waqf

One of the most elegant examples of the Ottoman waqf concept is embodied in a women's waqf established in Nicosia. Founded by Hatice Hanım, this waqf has not only provided financial assistance; it has also aimed to preserve spiritual values, support students and keep the culture of worship alive. This philanthropic approach, which continues to inspire today, sheds light on the needs of the future with the simplicity of the past.



Mrs Hatice is the daughter of Hacı Mustafa Aga, a prominent philanthropist in Cyprus. At a time when female foundation founders were generally overshadowed, Mrs Hatice stood out for her sensitivity towards society and established a meaningful waqf based on three core pillars: values education, worship culture and student encouragement.

The waqf stipulated that when the month of Mevlid arrived, a Mevlid-i Şerif should be recited at the Mescid-i Şerif in the Ebu Kavuk Paşa neighbourhood of Nicosia, followed by a hatim programme. It was envisaged that those reciting the Mevlid would receive 40 kuruş, while those reciting the hatim would receive 25 kuruş.

Furthermore, the waqf deed clearly states the

obligation to recite one Yasin daily and one Mevlid and one hatim on blessed days and nights. This clause is a powerful indication of Hatice Hanım's strong desire to perpetuate spirituality.

These initiatives have not only ensured the continuation of religious practices but have also provided material recognition for the efforts of those contributing to worship. Thus, the waqf has both encouraged worship and transformed it into a systematic practice.

The waqf has supported the students of the large and small madrasas in the Ayasofya neighbourhood of Nicosia in participating collectively in the Mevlid programme during the month of Mevlid.

At the same time, special programmes organised

on the nights of Regaip and Kadir have ensured that students are directed towards worship. These practices are valuable social activities that enable students to encounter national and spiritual values. This approach is a model of education and value transfer that goes beyond the classical understanding of charity.

Hatice Hanım Hacı Mustafa Ağa Waqf has demonstrated the depth of female waqf founders in the Ottoman Empire by pursuing the goals of education, worship and social bonding simultaneously. This waqf is also a concrete example of how foundation culture became an organised system.

Waqfs that Prepare Dowries for Girls and Organise Weddings

The Ottoman tradition of charitable waqfs, which implemented social solidarity through well-structured systems, provided vital support for poor, orphaned and vulnerable women. These waqfs, which extended a helping hand to young women without dowries and covered the wedding expenses of poor women wishing to marry, stand before us today as a social heritage worthy of remembrance and preservation.

The Es-Seyyid Mehmed Esad Efendi Waqf (1845)

Established in Istanbul in 1845 by Es-Seyyid Mehmed Esad Efendi, one of the Ottoman Empire's leading statesmen, this waqf is one of the strongest examples of how charitable institutions can take on not only a financial but also a social mission.

The waqf not only prepared dowries for young women in need, but also:

- Built roads, piers and pavements,
- Paid salaries to elderly boatmen and porters,
- And responded to the unseen needs of social life.

The following statement in the waqf's charter clearly sets out the scope and intention of the aid:

"Tezvic ü teçhiz-i ebkâr u ifam ve ilbâs-ı eramil ü eytam." (Marrying off unmarried girls, clothing widows and orphans)

This approach demonstrates how the lack of a dowry for a young woman was seen as a major social problem in Istanbul at that time and how the solution was organised at the public level.

Ayşe Siddika Hanım Waqf (1865)

Established by Ayşe Siddika Hanım, daughter of Çapanzade Abdulfettah Bey, this waqf began operating in 1865 with the aim of supporting women's participation in social life.

The waqf allocated a specific budget each year to: Contribute to the wedding expenses of poor women, provide clothing to elderly women in

the aid provided was not only material but also carried a meaning of moral support:

"Nefsini âhere tezvic murad eden fakire hatunların cemiyetleriyle elbiselerine..." (To be spent on the clothing of those in need of clothing...)

These statements demonstrate how waqfs have played an active role in making women more visible in social life and how this role has been carried out in an institutional manner.

From Past to Future

The Ottoman waqf system stood out not only for its religious structures but also for its services that ensured social cohesion and were based on human dignity. Charitable practices such as dowry, wedding and clothing support, which enabled women to take their place in society with dignity, are among the most elegant examples of this understanding.

Today, remembering these traditions is not merely a nostalgic endeavour; it is also important for understanding the roots of social justice and carrying them into the future.

As the Cyprus Evkaf Administration, we consider

it our duty to be the bearers of this culture and to rebuild the forgotten bridges of the civilisation of compassion.



need, and make social assistance a systematic and continuous service.

The following sentence in its charter reveals that



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