This workshop is organized within the framework of the
ERC-2024-CoG 'OttomanCORE'
funded by European Union's Horizon Europe research and innovation programme
under grant agreement No 101170435

Conveners: Grigor Boykov and Mariya Kiprovska

What constitutes governance in an imperial context, and how might it be analyzed beyond the prism of centralized state power? Broadly understood as the exercise of control over resources, territory, and population, governance entails the infrastructural capacities to accumulate, regulate, communicate and redistribute. Yet, in the Ottoman case, much like in other imperial contexts, this capacity has often been associated almost exclusively with the centralizing authority of the imperial household and its bureaucratic apparatus.

The workshop will revisit Ottoman governance as a dynamic and negotiated field of interaction among diverse actors – imperial, regional, and local – whose overlapping interests and spheres of influence shaped the empire's capacity to rule. By emphasizing spatial and social foundations of authority, we aim to explore how regional elites, intermediaries, and communities contributed to the making of imperial order. A further aim is to refine the analytical vocabulary through which these processes are described.

We would like to inform you that photos will be taken during the event. These photos will be used for documentation and presentation purposes.

Funded by the European Union

erc European Research Council

OttomanCORE

universität wien

Ottoman Core

Conceptual, Spatial, and Actor-Centered Perspectives on Ottoman Governance

Kick-off Workshop

2-3 July 2026 | Thu-Fri

Venue: University of Vienna
Lecture Hall
Department for East European History (IOG)
Spitalgasse 2, Hof 3, Eingang 3.2 (Campus)

DAY 1 | 2 July 2026 | Thursday

9:30–10:00 **Welcoming remarks** by Grigor Boykov and Mariya Kiprovska

10:00–13:00 **Panel 1: Defining the Ottoman Core**

Chair: Mariya Kiprovska | University of Vienna

Grigor Boykov | University of Vienna
Defining the Ottoman Core: What, Where, and Why?

Efe Erünal | Koç University
Breaking the *Tahrir* Code: Methods, Challenges, and Prospects of Handwritten Text Recognition Models for Ottoman Tax Registers

Chavdar Kirilov | University of Sofia
One Database to Rule Them All? The Philosophy of a Holistic Approach to Historical, Archaeological, and Cartographic Data

12:30-13:00 *Panel Discussion with comments by Oliver Jens Schmitt | University of Vienna*

13:00–14:30 **Lunch break**

14:30–18:30 **Panel 2: Households, Decision-Making, and Governance**

Chair: H. Erdem Çıpa | University of Michigan

Mariya Kiprovska | University of Vienna
Peripheral Outliers or Regional Stakeholders: Household Networks at Work in Ottoman Provincial Governance

15:30–16:00 **Coffee break**

İsmail Emre Pamuk | Istanbul University
Between (In)formal and (Im)personal: *Dīvān-ı Hümāyūn*, Decision-Making, and Governance in the Ottoman Empire (1453–1579)

Günhan Börekçi | İbn Haldun University
Mapping the Power and Household Networks of the Premodern Ottoman Elite: Towards a 'Big Picture,' Albeit Slowly

18:00-18:30 *Panel Discussion with comments by Cemal Kafadar | Harvard University*

19:00 **Dinner**

DAY 2 | 3 July 2026 | Friday

10:00–12:30 **Panel 3: Revisiting the Devshirme System**

Chair: Claudia Römer | University of Vienna

Baki Tezcan | University of California, Davis
How the Periphery Comes to the Center: The Practice of Devshirme and Ottoman Governance

Muhsin Soyudoğan | Gaziantep University
Rethinking *Devşirme*: The Ottoman *Timar* System as a Secondary Devşirme Institution

12:00-12:30 *Panel Discussion with comments by Tijana Krstić | Central European University*

12:30–14:00 **Lunch break**

14:00–18:00 **Panel 4: Provincial Elites and the Structure of Ottoman Governance**

Chair: Grigor Boykov | University of Vienna

Elias Kolovos | National Hellenic Research Foundation
Ottoman Veterans in the Provincial Administration: The Case of Salonica as a Pension Sancak (*ber vech-i tekaüd*) during the Fifteenth Century

15:00–15:30 **Coffee break**

Phokion Kotzageorgis | Aristotle University of Thessaloniki
Landed Estates of the House of Evrenos: Preliminary Findings

Emir O. Filipović | University of Sarajevo
Household as Empire: The Ishaković Family of Skopje and the Spatial Foundations of Ottoman Rule

17:30-18:00 *Panel Discussion with comments by Amy Singer | Brandeis University*

18:00–18:30 **Concluding Remarks** and **Final Discussion**
led by Grigor Boykov and Mariya Kiprovska

18:30 **Closing reception**