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Key participants:

Elie Haddad, École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales, Paris

Filipa Lopes, Universidade NOVA, Lisbon and US Fulbright program at UC Riverside

Jean-François Chauvard, Université de Lyon, France

Lloyd Bonfield, New York University

Marco Cavetti, Centre national de la recherche scientifique, ERC PERFORM.ART project, Rome

Maria de Lurdes Rosa, Universidade NOVA, Lisbon

Michael Crawford, McNeese University, Lake Charles, LA, USA

Pedro Cardim, Universidade NOVA, Lisbon

Randolph C. Head, University of California, Riverside, CA, USA



Organizers :

Maria de Lurdes Rosa (NOVA Lisbon),
Randolph C. Head (UC Riverside),
Vanessa Wilkie (Huntington Library).

WORKSHOP

ENTAILING PERPETUITY

Corporate endowments in late medieval and early modern Europe

Family strategies and archival practices

March 19 at Huntington Library (by invitation only)
March 20 at UC Riverside

USA ≈ CALIFORNIA ≈ 19-20 MARCH, 2020

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Scienze, Archeologia, Scienze sociali



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Few legal phenomena have been so relevant to premodern European societies as entails, a specific strategy that evolved to protect family inheritances and reproduce elite social status. Continued in modern practices such as trusts and LLCs, entails as corporate bodies became one key site of elite social agency across Europe in the early modern period. By enabling aristocratic families to create stable patrimonial endowments immune to division by inheritance or dispersion by lack of heirs, entails of various kinds (*mayorazgo*, *morgadio*, *fedecomesso*, *Fideikommiss*, *strict settlement*) fundamentally shaped the trajectory of European elites by creating impersonal multigenerational legal entities that became, in a very real way, key actors in shaping elite kinship patterns, national political life and rural social orders. Significantly, the process of establishing, reproducing, and contesting entails depended on and profoundly transformed the production of both public and private archives and their organization, as recent research by the organizers has shown. Equally, the stepwise abolition of entails in much of Europe by 19th-century liberal states transformed elite identity and left profound traces in elite family archives. Yet many questions remain open that can be researched by bringing critical archival theory and new historical models of kinship to this phenomenon. How did entailment become authorized and institutionalized, how were the tensions between aristocratic self-interest and central control that it embodied negotiated, how did it function in comparative perspective, and how did it change?

Building on the Portuguese-Iberian case studied by the European Research Council VINCULUM project in Lisbon, this workshop will examine entailment as a diverse but pivotal practice embedded in law, aristocratic discourse, and kinship-based organization, which was routinely constituted in and documented by private and public archives. The workshop will systematically break with traditional research frontiers by examining cases from the 14th to 17th century in both continental and Atlantic spaces, including both comparative perspectives and the study of later archival figuration and reconfigurations of entails as a social practice.

March 19 (by invitation only)
Thursday – Huntington Library, Art Museum, and Botanical Gardens, San Marino, CA

≈ President's Conference Room

The Materialities of Entailment:
A workshop with Huntington manuscripts

8:30 Light breakfast served

9:15 **Welcome**
Vanessa Wilkie, Maria de Lurdes Rosa, Randolph C. Head

9:30 **Documents of entailment: presentation and discussion of materials from the Huntington collections**
Vanessa Wilkie, Clay Stalls, and Huntington archival staff

10:30 Coffee

ERC projects involving family archives

10:45 **Presentation and discussion: The VINCULUM project in comparative perspective: Goals, materials, scope**
Maria de Lurdes Rosa

Roman noble family archives in the PERFORM.ART project
Marco Cavietti

12:00 Reception and Lunch

March 20
Friday – UC Riverside

≈ Round Room INTS 1111

Entailment, social agency, and archival dynamics

9:00 **Welcome**
Randolph C. Head, Maria de Lurdes Rosa, Benjamin Liu

9:15 **Premodern corporate societies: a historiographical review**
Pedro Cardim

The social history of the aristocracy in Iberia in the later Middle Ages
Michael Crawford

10:45 Coffee

11:00 **Kin and archival strategies in oligarchic republics: Swiss perspectives on family archives**
Randolph C. Head

Historiographical perspectives on premodern family archives
Filipa Lopes

12:00 Lunch at the History Department Library

13:30 **Entail (fedecomessi) in Italian societies**
Jean François Chauvard

Entail in Iberian societies: an overview
Maria de Lurdes Rosa

14:45 Coffee

15:15 **Les fidéicommiss et la noblesse française d'Ancien Régime**
Elie Haddad

English dimensions of entail in historical comparison
Lloyd Bonfield

16:30 **Closing roundtable**
Maria de Lurdes Rosa and Randolph C. Head