Philanthropy Today? Philanthropy Tomorrow?
University of St. Andrews

Philanthropy, Policy, and Public Debates –
Insights and Experiences from Germany

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Gaius Cilnius Maecenas
70 B.C. – 8 B.C.
Titel Vortrag / Inhaltsverzeichnis

- German Foundations: An Overview
- Some Examples
- Foundations in Civil Society
- Trends
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Foundations in Germany

- usually, but **not necessarily** started by one or several philanthropists

- serve multiple purposes

- usually, but not necessarily serve the public good

- are not restricted to making grants

- are strictly speaking not philanthropic, being compelled by law and the founder’s will to serve their purposes
Foundations in Germany

- serve their purposes as
  - owners
  - operating institutions
  - grant making institutions
  - benevolent institutions

- are not restricted in terms of assets (may own related and unrelated businesses)

- follow a Mediterranean / European tradition.
Foundations

- a common feature of our common mediterranean, European heritage
- known to have existed in ancient Egypt, Mesopotamia, Greece, Rome &c.
- a long and rich tradition in Arab and other Muslim cultures, and in European cultures
The Theatre at Leptis Magna: A Foundation dating from 2 B.C.
Munich Cathedral
A Foundation dating from 1271/1468
Stiftung Bürgerspital Würzburg
A Foundation dating from 1316
The Fuggerei in Augsburg
A Foundation dating from 1521
Albrecht Dürer: Four Apostles, owned by Wittelsbacher Landesstiftung für Kunst und Wissenschaft since 1923
Foundations in Germany

- Surprisingly, foundations have survived all political changes in what is today Germany.

- Foundations take a number of different legal forms:
  - civil law foundation with legal personality,
  - trust form without legal personality,
  - private limited Company
  - public Law Foundation
  - church Law Foundation
  - other
Foundations in Germany

- total number unknown
- estimate: approx. 40,000 (including small trusts)
- most foundations are quite small
- approx. 60% created since 2000
- approx. 95% are recognized charities
- approx. 100,000 church-affiliated foundations
defined by their adherence to the founder’s will, not by assets

Prototypes of an hierarchical organisation, as opposed to membership organisations which are heterarchical
The Maecenata Foundation: A Think Tank

MAECENATA FOUNDATION

Policy

MAECENATA INSTITUTE

TOCQUEVILLE FORUM

TRANS-NATIONAL GIVING

EUROPE BOTTOM UP

Independent

Academic

Institution

Support

Information

Networking

Service

Advocacy

Action
Foundations in Civil Society
Foundations in Civil Society: Contribution

- Watchdog
- Advocacy
- Service Provision
- Self Help
- Intermediary
- Community Building
- Political Participation

MAECENATA INSTITUT
Foundations in Civil Society: Value added

- Inclusion and Integration
- Reputation
- Ideas and Know-How
- Participation – School of Democracy
- Social Capital
- Social Change
- Social Peace
- Civility
Trends

(1) Pro-active grant-making

(2) Operating model

(3) Pro-active engagement in public affairs
Foundations take on
- schools
- universities
- museums
- institutions for the handicapped
- &c.
Trends

- **Foundations**
  - organize public and confidential debates
  - move agendas by convening
  - commission and/or organize surveys &c.
  - publish and disseminate policy papers
  - lobby for causes with decision makers
Foundations in Public Debates

- First begun by Reinhard Mohn: 1980s

- Today:
  - Bertelsmann Foundation
  - Mercator Foundation
  - Bosch Foundation
  - Koerber Foundation
  - others
  - political party foundations
Foundations in Public Debates

- Privileged in terms of tax benefits over other charities!
- Considerable influence
- Criticism on grounds of equal access
- Criticism on grounds of poor accountability
- (Case against political activity of ATTAC pending)
Publications

