

# Endowment Record in Manuscript of the Rüstem Pasha Madrasa

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## Context

The full-page endowment (*waqf*) record transcribed below was written on the last pages of the manuscripts endowed by Rüstem Pasha to his madrasa in Istanbul's Cağaloğlu district. In Ottoman manuscripts, records indicating that books were endowed were typically written on the first (*zahrîyye*) pages and in much shorter forms. These records would usually include critical information, such as who endowed the books and to where. However, this endowment record from the Rüstem Paşa Medresesi is a rare example of its kind. The record on the manuscripts includes long prayer statements and detailed conditions that are more commonly seen in endowment deeds (*vaqfiyye*).

According to the endowment deed,<sup>1</sup> Rüstem Pasha donated a total of 150 volumes to the madrasa. Today, 13 of these manuscripts are missing. However, with later additions the current number has reached 186.<sup>2</sup> The long endowment record appears in 137 manuscripts in the collection that were initially donated by Rüstem Pasha.

The endowment record appears to have been written consecutively and by the same hand. It was likely composed by the trustee (*mütevelli*) of the foundation or a scribe, as seen in similar donation examples. Additionally, occasional strikethroughs of incorrect words and changes at the word level suggest that the writing process may not have been particularly meticulous.

In the endowment record, standard elements such as praises (*hamdele*), prayers (*şalvele*), the name of the founder, and the location of the endowment are documented in greater detail compared to the typical foundation records commonly found in Ottoman manuscripts. For example, while Rüstem Pasha is described as a friend of knowledge and scholars, the record also includes hadiths highlighting the virtues of knowledge and scholars. It further references the Islamic principles that underpin the culture of endowments. In Islamic tradition, three deeds continue to benefit a person after their death, one of which is perpetual charity. Since establishing an endowment is

<sup>1</sup> Vakıflar Genel Müdürlüğü Arşivleri (VGMA), defter 635/2, p. 160.

<sup>2</sup> Elif Derin, "Establishment and Continuity of the Rüstem Pasha Madrasa Library", *Kadim* 7 (April 2024), 1-19.

considered a form of perpetual charity, Rüstem Pasha's motivation for founding this endowment was to leave behind a lasting legacy of good deeds after his death.

The subsequent part of the record outlines the conditions of the endowment, which are described as thoroughly as in an endowment deed. The manuscripts were donated for the use of scholars and students and were to be placed in the lecture room (*dershâne*) of Rüstem Pasha's madrasa which was built in Constantinople, on the strict condition that they should never be removed from there. Interestingly, instead of directly stating "lecture room," the term "a room (*beyt*) referred to as the lecture room" is used, raising questions about the use of the term *dershâne* at that time. After emphasizing that neither the manuscripts nor any of their parts must be removed from the lecture room, the record reiterates that even when the manuscripts require repair, they cannot be taken out of the madrasa. According to the endowment record, the book-binder must be brought to the madrasa under the supervision of the teacher (*müderriş*) and trustee (*mütevelli*), and repairs must be carried out there. Furthermore, the manuscripts cannot be removed for copying (*istinsâh*) or study (*muṭalâ'a*), and the book custodian (*ḥāfız-ı kütüb*) must not leave the lecture room during such activities. The record concludes with a warning of divine punishment for those who fail to adhere to the endowment conditions or attempt to alter them.

As previously mentioned, it is unusual for such a detailed record to be written on manuscripts. This raises the question as to why Rüstem Pasha included a donation record of this nature on the manuscripts he endowed. Nev'izâde Atâî (d. 1635) notes in his work that Rüstem Pasha appointed a *müderriş* to the madrasa in 1547 with a salary of fifty *ağçes*.<sup>3</sup> Meanwhile, the inscription on the madrasa building states that it was built in 957 AH (1550 CE).<sup>4</sup> Rüstem Pasha's comprehensive endowment deeds were prepared in 1561 and 1562. Since the record written on the manuscripts does not include a date, the exact time when the manuscripts were placed in the madrasa

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<sup>3</sup> Nev'izâde Atâî, *Hadâ'iku'l-Hakâ'ik Fi Tekmileti's-Şakâ'ik* (İstanbul: Türkiye Yazma Eserler Kurumu Başkanlığı Yayınları, 2007), 567.

<sup>4</sup> Mübahat Kütükoğlu, XX. Asra Erişen İstanbul Medreseleri (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Yayınları, 2000), 60.

remains unclear. Based on other examples in Ottoman history, it is possible that education began in a different location before the madrasa building was completed. In any case, it is understood that the official endowment deed had not yet been prepared when teaching began in the madrasa. Since the endowment deed had not been registered, Rüstem Pasha or the foundation officials must have found it appropriate to record the conditions directly in the endowed manuscripts.

### Transcription

- [1] *Al-ḥamdu li-llāhi alladhī faḍḍala al-insāna bi-faḍā`ili l-`ulūmi wa-maḥāsini l-a`māli wa-l-ṣalātu `alā*
- [2] *sayyidinā Muḥammadin alladhī ursila ilaynā li-bayāni ṭarīqati l-ḥaqqi wa-aḥāsini al-af`āli wa-`alā ālihi wa-aṣḥābihi*
- [3] *al-mujāhidīna li-i`lā`i l-dīni fī al-ghadwi wa-l-iṣāli `ammā ba`du fa-inna l-nabīya ṣalla-llāhu `alayhi*
- [4] *wa-sallama lammā qāla fī bayāni faḍīlati l-`ilmi faḍlu l-`ilmi khayrun min faḍli l-`ibādati wa-fī bayāni*
- [5] *faḍīlati-l-`ulamā`i faḍlu l-`ālimi `ala-l-`ābidi ka-faḍli `alā adnākum wa-fī ḥadītin ākhara inna*
- [6] *l-`ulamā`a warathatu l-anbiyā`i ilḥ kāna ṣāḥibu al-khayrāti wa-l-ḥasanāti ḥaḍratu Rustam Pāshā – yassarahu llāhu*
- [7] *fī l-dunyā wa-l-ākhirati mā yashā`u – muḥibban li-l-`ilmi wa-l-`ulamā`i wa-arāda l-dalālata `alā ṭalabi l-`ilmi*
- [8] *wa-l-ishtighāli bihi ṭāliban li-l-thawābi mithla ajri `āmilihi `alā muqtaḍā l-ḥadīthi l-sharīfi*
- [9] *wa-huwa l-dāllu `alā al-khayri ka-fā`ilihi wa-qāṣada an yataṣaddaqa li-l-`ulamā`i wa-l-ṭālibīna li-l-`ilmi*
- [10] *ṣadaqatan jāriyatan wa-ḥasanatan ghayra munqaṭi`atin `alā muqtaḍā ḥadīthi l-nabiyyi l-mukarrami ṣalla*

- [11] *-llāhu ‘alayhi wa-sallama idhā māta bnu ‘ādama nqaṭa‘a ‘amaluhu illā ‘an thalāthatin waladin ṣālihin yad‘ū lahu wa-‘ilmin*
- [12] *yantafi‘u bihi wa-ṣadaqatin jāriyatīn wa-inna-l-mu‘minīna fī zill-i ṣadaqātihim fa-waqafa hādha l-kitāba li-l-muḥtājīna*
- [13] *min al-‘ulamā‘i wa-l-ṭālibīna li-l-‘ilmi wa-sharṭu an yuḍ‘a fī baytin yusammā bi-l-darskhāna fī madrasatin*
- [14] *banāhā wāqifu l-mazbūri fī baldat Qusṭanṭīniyya wa-lā yakhruj al-kitābu l-madhkūru wa-lā ba‘du*
- [15] *ajzā‘ihi ‘ani l-bayti l-madhkūri abadan wa-in iḥtāja l-kitābu l-madhkūru ilā l-tar-mīmi yuḥaḍḍiru l-mujallidu*
- [16] *bi-ma‘rifati l-mudarrisi wa-l-mutawallī ilā l-bayti l-madhkūri wa-yurammimuhu ḥattā yuḥfaẓa bi-maḥḍari ḥāfiẓi l-kutubi*
- [17] *wa-sharṭu ayḍan an yaḥḍura yatawaqqafa ḥāfiẓi l-kutubi kulla yawmin mina l-ṣubḥ ilā l-zuhri*
- [18] *fī l-madrasati l-madhkūrati wa-lā yaghību ‘anhā li-itmāmi marāmi l-muḥtājīna wa-fī waqti ntisākhi*
- [19] *aḥadi l-muḥtājīna l-madhkūrīna l-kitāba l-mazbūra aw muṭāla‘atihi iyyāhu lā yaghību ḥāfiẓi l-kutub*
- [20] *‘ani l-bayti l-madhkūri bal yaḥḍuru fīhi ḥattā yaqḍiya-l-muḥtāju l-madhkūru ḥājatahu wa-ba‘da itmāmi ḥājatīhi*
- [21] *aḥazzuhu ḥāfiẓi l-kutubi wa-yahfaẓuhu fī mawḍi‘ihi lladhī ‘uyyina li-l-ḥifẓi fīhi wa-sharṭu ayḍan*
- [22] *an yakūna ḥāfiẓi l-kutubi min ahli l-‘ilmi qādiran ‘alā muṭāla‘atihi hādha l-kitāba wa-qad raw‘ā fīhi*
- [23] *mā lā budda minhu fī kawni waqfi l-manqūlāti waqfan bi-l-ittifāqi wa-ba‘da murā‘āti mā lā*
- [24] *budda minhu l-madhkūru kāna hādha l-kitābu waqfan ṣaḥīḥan shar‘iyyan bi-l-ittifāqi fa-lā yaḥillu li-aḥadin yu‘minu*
- [25] *bi-llāhi wa-l-yawmi l-ākhirī an yatabaddalahu fa-man baddalahu ba‘da mā sami‘ahu fa-innamā ithmuhu ‘ala lladhīna yubaddilūnahu*

[26] *Inna llāha samī'un 'alīmun wa man ta'addā fa-khālaḥa fī shay'in min waḍa'ahu fa-huwa zālimun allā la'natu llāhi*

[27] *'alā l-zālimīna*<sup>5</sup>

## Translation

Praise be to Allah, who distinguished mankind with the virtues of knowledge and the merits of good deeds. Blessings and peace be upon our master Muhammad, who was sent to us to clarify the path of truth and the most excellent actions, as well as upon his family and companions, who strive to elevate the faith day and night.

As to what follows; the Prophet – peace and blessings of Allah be upon him – when speaking about the virtue of knowledge, said: “The virtue of knowledge is greater than the virtue of worship.” Regarding the virtue of scholars, he said: “The superiority of the scholar over the worshipper is like my superiority over the least of you.” In another hadith, he stated: “Scholars are the heirs of the Prophets.” Inspired by this, the esteemed Rüstem Pasha – may Allah make his path easy in this world and the hereafter as He wills – a friend of knowledge and scholars, sought to guide toward the pursuit of knowledge and engagement with it, aspiring to gain rewards akin to the doer of these deeds, in accordance with the noble hadith: “The one who guides to goodness is like the one who performs it.”

He aimed to offer perpetual charity (*ṣadaqatun jāriyatun*) and unending good deeds by dedicating this act to scholars and students of knowledge, in line with the noble hadith of the Prophet – peace and blessings be upon him –: “When a human dies, his deeds cease except for three: a righteous child who prays for him, beneficial knowledge, and perpetual charity.” Indeed, the believers will be sheltered under the shade of their charities.

Therefore, this book is endowed for the needy among the scholars and students of knowledge. It is stipulated that it shall be placed in a room called “*dershāne*” (lecture

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<sup>5</sup> SüleymaniyeYazma Eser Kütüphanesi, Rüstem Paşa 54, 235b.

room) within a madrasa built by him in the city of Constantinople, and that the book or any of its parts shall never be removed from this house.

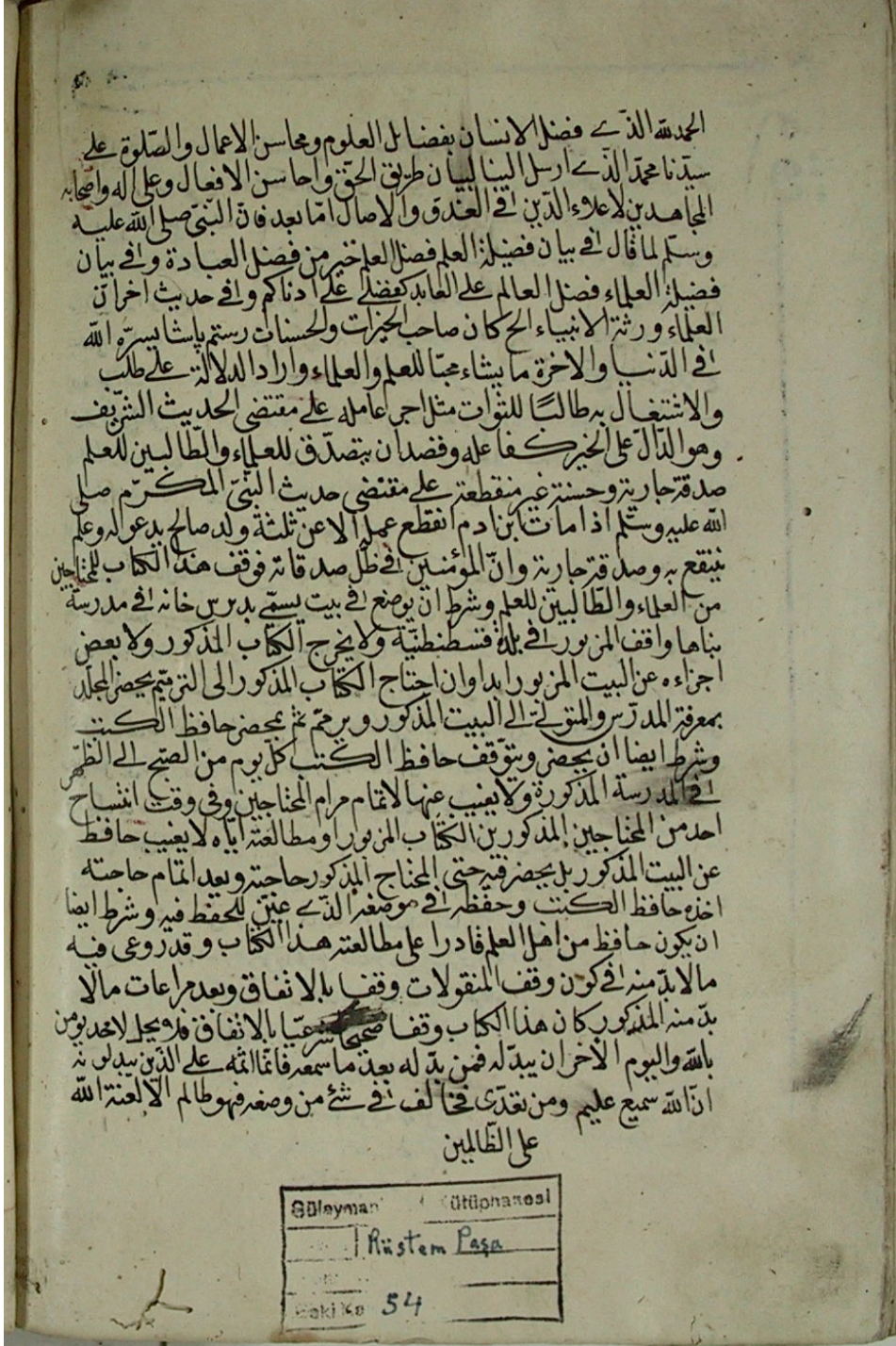
If the aforementioned book requires repair, the binder shall be summoned by the knowledge of the teacher and the trustee of the said house to repair it in the presence of the book custodian. It is also stipulated that the book custodian shall be present every day from morning until noon in the aforementioned madrasa and shall not be absent, ensuring the needs of the beneficiaries are fulfilled.

When one of the aforementioned needy individuals copies or reads the book, the custodian shall not leave the room but remain present until the person has fulfilled their need. Afterward, the custodian shall return the book to its designated storage location appointed for its safekeeping.

It is also stipulated that the custodian of the books shall be a person of knowledge capable of studying this book. The legal requirements for the endowment of movable assets have been observed, making this endowment valid and in accordance with Islamic law.

It is not permissible for anyone who believes in Allah and Judgement Day to alter it. Whoever changes it after hearing this, the sin shall rest upon those who make such changes. Indeed, Allah is the All-Hearer, the All-Knower. Whoever transgresses and opposes any part of this stipulation is a wrongdoer, and upon the wrongdoers is the curse of Allah.

## Facsimile





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