

## Ottoman Waqf–Medreses in Greece “Archival & architectural study

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### Summary

This paper focuses on the study the education system of the ottoman medrese considering mainly the waqfiyehs and the extant ottoman medreses –either partially or entirely– in Greece. Waqfiyehs of the educational institutions in Greece provide a wealth of information concerning the scholastic system, staff, students, salaries, duties, and process of working of these institutes, and in sometimes a brief data regarding their architectural shape. This study proposes new publishing of early 15th century Ottoman waqfiyehs. These waqfiyehs were written in Arabic; and gives aAnalysing the data in these waqf documents in addition to an important layout about the ottoman society then. Among these waqfiyehs are those of Haci Omar Bey Turhan in Trikala, Mehmed Bey bin Yaqob in Veroia, Faeiq Pasha in Arta. Also, this paper analyses the content of two later Ottoman waqfiyehs: the one of Veli Pasha in Ioannina and Mehmed Ali Pasha in Kavala. The latter was issued in Egypt.

This paper deciphers some existing foundation inscriptions of the extant ottoman medreses in Greece for first time. Among which are the foundation inscriptions of Osman Efendi medrese in Athens and Haci Mehmed Bey in Mytilene.

These waqfiyehs, foundation inscriptions and the extant ottoman structures picture the life of the ottoman medrese in Greece from many aspects. There are ten extant structures of the traditional ottoman medrese in Greece. This paper publishes these buildings in terms of the history of architecture along with the linked archival material, drawings, and inscriptions. The paper concludes with a recommendation emphasizes the necessity of preserving and maintenance these extant distinctive architectural models, and to invest these buildings in tourism with a civilizational suitable reuse.

### Ottoman medreses and waqf system

Medreses as an independent architectural institution have been associated with a radical change in the concept of education from individual learning to the institutional system, including the three main elements of education, which are the teacher “*muddris*” (or professor “*ustaedh*”), students, and the learning context. The latter comprises teaching areas, readiness, curriculum, books and schooling tools. From here, medreses were linked to libraries, as well as places of residence for the teacher(s), students and school personnel, and to provide them with water and food. In this context, the medrese was one of the most expensive Islamic architecture foundations to keep regular running with permanent and efficient way. In addition to the building and foundation expenses, the cost includes the teachers' and workers' wages, students' allowances to devote themselves to learning, and operating expenses of money, tools and supplies that include food, drinks, and lighting tools, Mats, notebooks, pens, ink pads, inks, books, annotations, closets, ... etc. Moreover, it includes the expenses of maintenance and restoration works whenever necessary. In order to secure the expenses of the medreses, its work and the continuity of that even after the death of the founder, the medreses were closely linked to the waqf system. It can be said that no medrese was built in the Ottoman era -according to the concept of Islamic medreses- without an endowment document “*waqfiyye*.” Some

endowments were used to operate existing schools or to increase their endowments and allocations.

### 1. Traditional Ottoman educational context considering the waqf system

Analysing the texts of the waqf documents of Ottoman buildings in Greece, regarding the medrese architecture, teaching staff and their wages, students and their allowances, the following conclusions can be drawn:

The extent of the importance of the endowment system in sponsoring and directing the building of schools and managing the educational process in the Ottoman Empire.

The high prestigious position of the teacher in the Ottoman community, which was reflected in the teachers' wages significantly. The average monthly salary of a teacher during the 9<sup>th</sup> century AH / 15<sup>th</sup> AD was 15 *akçes* or ten dirhams, which was a considerable salary, given that the medreses mentioned here were outside the main famous capitals of the Balkans. It should be noted that the teacher's salary here is the highest one, along with his allowances, in the endowment, and it is -in most cases- equal to the salary of the "*metwali*" endowment *nadhira*. Sometimes, the *waqfiyeh* assigned his teaching position to his descendants, as in the case of the Faik Pasha medrese in the city of Narda (Arta). *Waqfiyehs* also indicate the prestigious status of the teacher in Ottoman community; as declare some endowments which made the mandate - after the founder's family- to the kadi and teacher of the city.

- The school teacher is the most highly-paid, prestigious and highly paid teacher of all teaching staff, followed by a teacher, Khaneh, or writers; The ratio of the latter's wage to the teacher's wage ranges from a quarter to two-thirds.

- While teaching activities were carried out within a number of establishments, such as: mosques, mesjids, zawiye, hospices, houses, and libraries, in addition to the medreses and the *kuttab*. The approved formal education was only through the medrese, and the school's graduates represented the elite of the Ottoman society at that time, and they worked in teaching, judiciary and fatwa.

- Outstanding concern for school students, interest in teaching them morals and respect for order, and appreciating students morally and financially to encourage them to devote themselves to knowledge and strive to achieve it; By allocating prepared accommodations for them, providing food on a permanent and regular basis, allocating sums of money in return for their dedication to acquiring knowledge and not working and being preoccupied with crafts or trade. Student gets one dirham (or one daily supplement), excluding food and accommodation. In early medreses, each student lived in a single room, and the number of students matched the number of school rooms. While, late Ottoman medreses characterised with double rooms, as the waqfiyeh of Wali Eddin Bayanih medrese at Ioannina, and the one of the Mehmed Ali Pasha in Kavala show.

- The shift from the traditional educational system to the institutional one in the 13<sup>th</sup> century AH (19<sup>th</sup> c. AD) is observed in the managing way that appeared in the waqfiyehs o waqfiyehf Ottoman late medreses. This was visible in the number of students, which was a small number, mostly under twenty, then reached one hundred and twenty, as the waqfiyeh of Mehmed Ali Pasha medrese stated. Also, the wage system from the daily payment to the monthly salary (*mahiya*), as well as the annual leave and Hajj leave system, giving a refrence for the institutional education system and State schools.

- The values of teachers' salaries, the payment currencies reflect the Ottoman monetary and economic system and its development over centuries. It also sheds light on the nature of the farming system, crops and auxiliary services to them, while giving special value to olive trees and olive presses, and livestock as main fund recouses in Ottoman Greece.

It is noticed from the teacher's fee in the three endowments for the contemporary end of the AH 9<sup>th</sup>/15<sup>th</sup> century that the teacher's wage was daily, and the amount was 10 dirhams or its equivalent, and that it was approximately equivalent to 15 akce, plus 1/30 kilogram of wheat and 1/360 of rice, taking into account the Taking into account that the units of mass and magnitude of weight differed from place to place within the Ottoman Empire. In the 13<sup>th</sup> century AH / 19 AD, the wage system was in the monthly and annual system, and there were grades for teachers: a first teacher (professor) and a second teacher, and the big difference between their salaries reflects the difference between the degree and the requirements for appointing and duties of each. Comparing the waqfiyehs of Ioannina medrese and the Mehmed Ali medrese in Kavala shows the big difference between the salary values of the teacher, even both date back to the AH 13<sup>th</sup> / AD 19<sup>th</sup> century; this concludes that the teachers' salaries were associated with the numbers of students and the potential of the founder.

Medrese students were also divided into categories, and were known by several names.

- The endowment used to sometimes require medrese students -apart from taking lessons- to recite certain verses from the Qur'an or to recite specific supplications and supplications for the endowment holder on information days, and they were sometimes allocated additional fees for that.

Some students were employed to serve the Waqf Mosque as an imam or muezzin for a fee other than his financial allowances as a student.

- There was a strict system for studying and licenses in medreses, and there were penalties for those who violated this up to dismissal from the school.

Many Examples show that numbers of Ottoman medrese were originally houses and concerted later to medreses as the case of the Aisha Khatun Girls' Education School in Athens, the Qadi Syed Ahmed Bey Ibn the Late Abdullah Bey School in Demirhisar, the office of the Mufti of Athens, Hamzah Effendi bin Ishaq Effendi, etc.

- The medrese was -in most cases- next to a mosque if it was not the same that it included a mosque, so the teacher and students used to pray in the mosque, and next to the mosque and the school there was also a corner or building -the endowment documents mentioned it, and described its employees, tasks and wages, as well as their jobs and to whom the provision of the service and its expenses- to feed the poor, travelers and workers of these buildings free of charge; Thus, it provided students, teachers, and medrese staff, the kuttab with their daily food.

- While the medrese came as a separate and separate building close to the mosque; The Dar al-Ta`lim (the school of the children) was often attached to the mosque, and not an independent building, especially in the 15<sup>th</sup> century AD buildings, as indicated by the waqfiyeh of the Faik Pasha mosque and medrese in Arta. This formation, where the school, along with a mosque adjacent to the same builder, is a characteristic of Ottoman architecture in Greece, and among its existing examples are the mosque and medrese of Khalil Agha in Kavala, and the mosque and medrese of Sultan Ibrahim of Chania in Crete. The documents and endowments refer to a large number of examples in Greece of the juxtaposition between the mosque and the medrese, and in many cases other buildings such as: the kuttab, imaret, or zawiye, or fountain ...

## 2. History and architecture of Ottoman medreses

The medrese was one of the architectural constants in the Ottoman city in the Balkans, especially in the main cities. The Ottomans built six hundred and sixty-five (665) medreses throughout their rule over the Balkan countries.

The medrese of Suleiman Pasha (735-758 AH / 1335-1357 CE) is the oldest Ottoman school preserving its original layout -the model that all Ottoman medreses followed in plan; It consists of a classroom "*dershane*" and eleven students' rooms, which occupy three sides that wrap around an open celestial courtyard, forming a shape  $\Pi$ , and this (Ottoman) layout -with different styles- prevailed in Balkan countries. This model was also found in the Islamic countries that joined under the Ottoman rule. Studies of the history of Islamic architecture in those countries call it (incoming Ottoman planning), (Ottoman, Istanbul-li architecture), and (Turkish or Turkish plan) to distinguish it from the planning of local medreses before the Ottoman era as in Egypt, Libya and the Levant.

It is worth noting that the predominance of the layout of the Ottoman medrese with one classroom represents a direct echo of the impact of adopting and teaching the single sect, which is the Hanafi School of thought in the Ottoman Empire. Whereas in most cases more than one sect was taught in Mamluk medreses; Which naturally corresponds to the multiplicity of teaching places in these schools represented mainly in the iwans, and then we find that the teaching of the one doctrine (Hanafi) in the Ottoman medreses contributed to the formulation of the school's layout with one classroom (*dershane*). The presence of the fountain for ablution in the center of the school courtyard also comes according to the prevailing Hanafi School of jurisprudence. According to the Hanafi School, it is not permissible for all worshipers to perform ablution from one pool of water. Because this affects the purity of the water in the basin and the tap believes that it is better for the water to pass from the basin through pipes to taps, so that it is decided to close and open them according to the need of the ablution. The fountain (*Shaidhrwan*) and the ablution of the medrese of Mehmed Ali Pasha Complex (1233 AH / 1817-1818 CE) in Kaval represent a distinctive example in this regard.

In the Ottoman plan, the rooms were distributed in the early period on three sides, sometimes on only two sides around the courtyard, and then became distributed on the four sides around the courtyard, according to the available space. The students' rooms are preceded by a vaulted shed, which in turn overlooks the courtyard through a vaulted arcade. The rooms, as well as the shed in front of them, were mostly covered with domes. The rooms were small, with an average area of 10: 12 square meters, and the two students lived in them. Each room was provided with a fireplace with a chimney, and wall closets. There was a teaching hall (*dershane*), and it was in the middle of the rooms, especially in one-storey medreses, or it was located in one of the school's corners in multi-storey medreses. In the early period, all medreses were one-story, and the *fusqia* in the middle of the courtyard was the source of water for the school, from which students drink and perform ablution for prayers. If the medrese is not part of an architectural complex that includes a mosque, then it has a mosque for prayers, or the classroom betrayed by itself is a mosque, regardless of its construction, in line with the direction of the qiblah; so the mihrab is in one of the corners of the hall or has azurons, as we find in the classroom of the mosque (originally *dershane*) of the Mehmed Ali Pasha medrese in its complex in the city of Kaval.

The Ottoman medreses in general are simple in their architecture and very limited in their

decoration compared to the Seljuk Medrese, so not to exaggerate the decoration in religious foundations in general and educational in particular is a general pattern that also applies to the Ottoman schools.

All Ottoman medreses in Greece followed the layout of the rooms, which were preceded by a shed and wrapped around an open celestial yard, or a rectangular projection of one row of rooms preceded by a shed overlooking the outside with a vaulted arcade, and the rooms in the Ottoman medreses in Greece came in light of the remaining models in one, two, and three storeys. Some medreses were suspended, the basement of which was occupied by shops, and most of the rent proceeds were due to the medrese endowment, and the Ahmed Pasha School in Kastoria represents the only remaining paradigm in Greece for suspended medreses.

### 3. The (Islamic) Ottoman medreses in Greece

The numbers of medreses remaining in Greece at present -whether preserved partially or fully- is ten (10) Ottoman (Islamic) medreses, in addition to a number of governmental *kuttab* and schools dated to the end of the 13<sup>th</sup> century AH / 19<sup>th</sup> AD and the beginning of the 14<sup>th</sup> century AD.

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