CAMBRIDGE

Cambridge University Press
978-1-107-17716-1 — Scholars and Sultans in the Early Modern Ottoman Empire
Abdurrahman Atçıl
Excerpt
More Information

Introduction

This book aims to open a window onto the successive turns and reconfigurations in Ottoman ideology and governance during the early modern period. To this end, it explores the changing roles and attitudes of Sunni scholars (ulema) in Ottoman lands from the fourteenth through the sixteenth century. How did the Ottomans adapt to the volatile global and regional, ideological and political conditions that shaped their world during this period? What functions did scholars serve in the Ottoman polity at different moments within this larger time? Did scholars help the Ottomans sustain their power? Did scholars exercise authority independently of the government? What policies did the Ottomans adopt in order to coopt scholars? How did the roles and positions of scholars in the Ottoman polity change?

The Ottomans ascended to the political stage by establishing a small principality in Bithynia, in northwestern Anatolia, at the turn of the fourteenth century. The early Ottoman political enterprise can be seen as a product of the conditions and limits set by the advance of the Chinggisid Mongols into the Islamic world. It functioned on the fringes of Anatolia and the Balkans and vied with several principalities to fill the power vacuum created by the collapse of the centralized Seljuk administration under Mongol attack. Its military power to a great extent depended on nomadic warriors, who moved westward to the frontiers in greater numbers after the arrival of the Mongols. Its rulers tried to legitimize their power by using a variety of Mongol and Islamic ideas – a feature of post-Mongol polities in the Islamic world.

The Ottoman political enterprise appears to have transformed from a post-Mongol principality into an early modern empire beginning in the second half of the fifteenth century.[1] The conquest of

[1] For some studies conceiving the early modern period (roughly from the fifteenth to the eighteenth century) as a global era in which societies from western Europe to China – including the Ottoman lands – developed shared features and trends, see Joseph Fletcher, "Integrative History: Parallels and

© in this web service Cambridge University Press www.cambridge.org

CAMBRIDGE

Cambridge University Press
978-1-107-17716-1 — Scholars and Sultans in the Early Modern Ottoman Empire
Abdurrahman Atçıl
Excerpt
More Information

Constantinople (Istanbul), the time-honored capital of the Roman (later, Byzantine) Empire, in 1453 appears as a milestone that properly marked the beginning of the transformation. This astonishing success underlined the military edge the Ottomans enjoyed over their rivals. Their advantage increased with the growing use of firearms in field and siege battles, a technology that marginalized nomadic warriors.[2] The Ottomans continued to extend their territories in the east and west after the conquest until the end of the sixteenth century, moving at differing paces during various periods and sometimes facing setbacks. Having brought Istanbul under their control and established rule over diverse geographies and peoples, the Ottomans gradually adopted an imperial identity and began to assert a universalist ideology. Related to this new imperial identity were efforts to establish a legal-bureaucratic administration, which would increase the center's power by facilitating its control of the provinces.

Bureaucratization was a particular global phenomenon of the early modern period. Imperial states at that time set out to recruit an army of *civil* officials to supplement their military control over the provinces.[3] These officials usually had legal knowledge and expertise by virtue of which they could fulfill administrative, judicial, financial, and scribal duties. They reported directly to the central government and augmented its power in the provinces. For example, in France and Spain, graduates of the burgeoning universities (*lieutenants* and *corregidors*,

Interconnections in the Early Modern Period, 1500–1800," *Journal of Turkish Studies* 9 (1985): 37–57; Cemal Kafadar, "The Ottomans and Europe," in *Handbook of European History, 1400–1600*, ed. Thomas A. Brady, Jr., Heiko A. Oberman, and James D. Tracy (Leiden: Brill, 1994–95), 1: 620–25; Sanjay Subrahmanyam, "Connected Histories: Notes towards a Reconfiguration of Early Modern Eurasia," *Modern Asian Studies* 31 (1997): 735–62; Baki Tezcan, *The Second Ottoman Empire: Political and Social Transformation in the Early Modern World* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

[2] The Ottomans began to use firearms in siege battles in the last decade of the fourteenth century. They first used field artillery in the battle of Kosovo in 1448. From the siege of Istanbul onwards, they used both artillery and handguns with increasing efficiency. Gábor Ágoston, *Guns for the Sultan: Military Power and the Weapons Industry in the Ottoman Empire* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 17–60. See also Gábor Ágoston, "War-Winning Weapons? On the Decisiveness of Ottoman Firearms from the Siege of Constantinople (1453) to the Battle of Mohács (1526)," *Journal of Turkish Studies (Defteroloji: Festschrift in Honor of Heath Lowry)* 39 (2013): 129–43.

[3] In this book, *civil* is used to describe officials and bureaucratic branches whose primary duties were not military.

© in this web service Cambridge University Press www.cambridge.org

CAMBRIDGE

Cambridge University Press
978-1-107-17716-1 — Scholars and Sultans in the Early Modern Ottoman Empire
Abdurrahman Atçıl
Excerpt
More Information

respectively) filled bureaucratic ranks and participated in administering the centralized states. In England, notables were appointed as justices of the peace in their respective localities and reported to the central government.[4] In Mughal India, Muslim and Hindu officials, who were fit into the *mansabdari* system, worked to realize the financial and legal goals of the central government in the provinces.[5] Along lines similar to these bureaucratization efforts, beginning in the second half of the fifteenth century, the Ottomans coopted into the imperial administration a sizable group of scholars who had trained in madrasas and had acquired the legal expertise and competence to fulfill various bureaucratic tasks. These scholars constituted a civil bureaucracy under the control of the central government and fulfilled legal, financial, scribal, diplomatic, and educational tasks.

From the perspective of earlier Islamic history, the bureaucratization of scholars in the Ottoman Empire in the early modern period appears to have been unprecedented. Generally speaking, in medieval Islamic society – where religious knowledge, law, and politics were hardly separable – scholars commanded special prestige and respect. Their specialized knowledge of the scriptural sources (the Qur'an and the Sunna) and the interpretation of these sources distinguished them from others and gave them the authority to define the beliefs and acts enjoined by Islam.[6] They transmitted their knowledge in informal gatherings or in the structured environment of madrasas. They also

[4] Eugene F. Rice, Jr., and Anthony Grafton, *The Foundations of Early Modern Europe, 1460–1559* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1994), 114–16.

[5] John F. Richards, *The Mughal Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 58–74. In Safavid Iran, local Iranian bureaucrats known as *tajik*s, as well as scholars, fulfilled administrative tasks assigned by the central government. For this, see Andrew J. Newman, *Safavid Iran: Rebirth of a Persian Empire* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2009), 13–40. In Ming China, scholars who passed the imperial examination on the Confucian classics were assigned to fulfill bureaucratic tasks. Charles O. Hucker, "Ming Government," in *The Cambridge History of China: The Ming Dynasty, Part 2*, ed. Denis Twitchett and John K. Fairbank (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 29–54.

[6] Patricia Crone and Martin Hinds, *God's Caliph: Religious Authority in the First Centuries of Islam* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 97–110; Wael B. Hallaq, *The Origins and Evolution of Islamic Law* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 57–78. See also Jonathan Brown, *The Canonization of al-Bukhārī and Muslim: The Formation and Function of the Sunnī Ḥadith Canon* (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 47–59; Ahmed El Shamsy, *The Canonization of Islamic Law: A Social and Intellectual History* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 44–87; Khaled Abou El Fadl, *Rebellion and Violence in Islamic Law* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 92–96.

© in this web service Cambridge University Press www.cambridge.org

CAMBRIDGE

Cambridge University Press
978-1-107-17716-1 — Scholars and Sultans in the Early Modern Ottoman Empire
Abdurrahman Atçıl
Excerpt
More Information

articulated religious and legal rules (sharia) and at times provided private nonbinding religio-legal guidance by acting as jurists (*müfti*s).[7] In addition, the legal and bureaucratic capabilities of scholars made them indispensable to the ruling authorities: they were appointed as judges (*kadı*s), judges of equity courts (*mazalim*), market inspectors (*muhtesib*s), and so on.[8]

Scholars, however, did not constitute a closed group or a social or professional class. Any member of society could acquire the status of scholar if he or she dedicated his or her time to learning the relevant texts and methods. The certificates (*icazet*; lit., "permission") given by teachers verified the qualifications of individual scholars. These certificates had no connection with the rulers and did not necessarily bring official rights.[9] Most often, scholars maintained an ordinary life and could not be easily recognized on the basis of their external trappings.[10]

In Islamic societies, scholars embodied a moral authority that was separate and independent from the political authority. By virtue of their knowledge, scholars had the right to define most of the religious and legal rules of the society. The wielders of political authority therefore could not interfere in scholarly matters unless they acquired the knowledge and skills of a scholar. The sensibilities of Muslim society undergirded scholars' authority and checked rulers, preventing them from encroaching on the scholars' sphere of expertise.[11] Further, scholars usually valued their distance from the ruling class. In different periods

[7] Wael B. Hallaq, *An Introduction to Islamic Law* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 7–13.
[8] Muhammad Qasim Zaman, *Religion and Politics under the Early ʿAbbāsids: The Emergence of Proto-Sunnī Elite* (Leiden: Brill, 1997), 71–81; Yossef Rapoport, "Royal Justice and Religious Law: *Siyāsah* and Sharīʿah under the Mamluks," *Mamluk Studies Review* 16 (2012): 86–92; Kristen Stilt, *Islamic Law in Action: Authority, Discretion, and Everyday Experiences in Mamluk Egypt* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 64–67.
[9] Jonathan P. Berkey, *The Transmission of Knowledge in Medieval Cairo* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1992), 21–43; Cemil Akpınar, "İcâzet," TDVIA.
[10] R. Stephen Humphreys, *Islamic History: A Framework for Inquiry* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1991), 195.
[11] For a thoughtful discussion about the authority of scholars, see Engin Deniz Akarlı, "*Maslaha* from 'Common Good' to 'Raison D'Etat' in the Experience of Istanbul Artisans (1730–1840)," in *Hoca, 'Allame and Puits de Science: Essays in Honor of Kemal H. Karpat*, ed. Kaan Durukan, Robert W. Zens, and Akile Zorlu-Durukan (Istanbul: Isis Press, 2010), 65–67. See also Frank E. Vogel, *Islamic Law and Legal System: Studies of Saudi Arabia* (Leiden: Brill, 2000), 178–221.

© in this web service Cambridge University Press www.cambridge.org

CAMBRIDGE

Cambridge University Press
978-1-107-17716-1 — Scholars and Sultans in the Early Modern Ottoman Empire
Abdurrahman Atçıl
Excerpt
More Information

and in different parts of the Islamic world, individual scholars established close relationships with rulers, serving, for instance, in madrasas established by the reigning rulers and acting as judges or advisers. But scholars' ethos prevented their becoming too closely enmeshed with the ruling class. Consorting with political authorities was thought to compromise the integrity of individual scholars.[12]

This broad-stroked depiction of scholars in medieval Islamic society does not seem to correspond, however, with the positions and perspectives of scholars in the Ottoman Empire during the early modern period. From the second half of the fifteenth century onward, the relationship of scholars with the sultans was not the reluctant service of a few individuals. Instead, a multitude of scholars accepted employment from the government. Some scholars spent their entire lives in careers within the imperial administration, where they were promoted up through the hierarchy and had their rights protected by laws, regulations, and precedent. As a result, scholars as a group became increasingly affiliated with the government through an institutional bond. They acquired the status of *askeri*, associated with the ruling class.[13] They also came to constitute a professional class, developed an *esprit de corps*, and began to underline their distinction from nonbureaucratic scholars. As a corollary to all of these developments, these scholars began to see their relationship with the government as valuable instead of as compromising.

The following pages present the story of this transformation in the position and attitudes of scholars in the Ottoman Empire from the fourteenth through the sixteenth century. I explore the contingencies and particular characteristics involved in scholars' integration into the Ottoman administration, paying due attention to historical, legal, internal, regional, and global factors.

Scholar-Bureaucrats

As the foregoing discussion indicates, policies that were implemented beginning in the second half of the fifteenth century resulted in the rise

[12] Hallaq, *An Introduction to Islamic Law*, 38–56; Bülent Çelikel, "Gazâlî'nin Dönemindeki Ulemâya Yöneltiği Eleştiriler," *Din Bilimleri Akademik Araştırma Dergisi* 13 (2013): 117–38; Abdullah Taha İmamoğlu, "'Gevenden ancak diken çıkar': Süyûtî'nin Gözüyle Ulema ve Siyaset," *Dîvân: Disiplinlerarası Çalışmalar Dergisi* 35 (2013): 199–222.

[13] The *askeri* status carried with it privileges as regards taxes and judicial procedure. For this, see Halil Sahillioğlu, "Askerî," TDVIA.

© in this web service Cambridge University Press www.cambridge.org

CAMBRIDGE

Cambridge University Press
978-1-107-17716-1 — Scholars and Sultans in the Early Modern Ottoman Empire
Abdurrahman Atçıl
Excerpt
More Information

of a professional group of scholars in Ottoman government service. I refer to them as *scholar-bureaucrats* to underline their distinctiveness.[14]

Scholar-bureaucrats received education on the Qur'an and the Sunna and the traditional knowledge derived from them. They served as professors, judges, or jurists. In other words, they acquired the traditional qualifications of and fulfilled the usual functions of scholars. Thus, there is nothing wrong in calling them scholars. At the same time, however, scholar-bureaucrats became affiliated with the Ottoman government through an institutional framework that was protected by laws and by established precedents. They pursued a lifetime career, accepting regular promotions to progressively better hierarchically organized positions. As legal experts, they fulfilled judicial, scribal, financial, and military tasks for the Ottoman government. This framework was not temporary but well established and durable, making it possible for a large group of men in every generation to professionally affiliate with the Ottoman government. Insofar as the nature of the relationship of these scholars with the government was concerned, they differed from their predecessors and contemporary nonbureaucratic scholars. As such, they appeared to be bureaucrats.[15]

An alternative concept in discussing the history of scholars in the Ottoman Empire is the *ilmiye* (Ottoman learned establishment).[16]

[14] For the usage of the term *scholar-bureaucrats* to refer to Iranian bureaucrats, who were distinguished by their literary knowledge and skills, see Colin P. Mitchell, *The Practice of Politics in Safavid Iran, Power, Religion and Rhetoric* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2009), esp. 9–16.

[15] I do not use the words *bureaucracy* and *bureaucrats* in the Weberian sense, which primarily associates them with modern legal and rational domination. For this, see Max Weber, *Economy and Society*, ed. Guenther Roth and Claus Wittich, 2 vols. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978), 1: 217–26.

[16] For some studies that take the *ilmiye* as their principal focus, see İsmail Hakkı Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Devletinin İlmiye Teşkilâtı* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1988); Richard C. Repp, "Some Observations on the Development of the Ottoman Learned Hierarchy," in *Scholars, Saints, and Sufis: Muslim Religious Institutions in the Middle East since 1500*, ed. Nikki R. Keddie (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1972), 17–32; Richard C. Repp, *The Müfti of Istanbul: A Study in the Development of the Ottoman Learned Hierarchy* (London: Ithaca, 1986), 27–72; Madeline C. Zilfi, "Sultan Süleymân and the Ottoman Religious Establishment," in *Süleymân the Second and His Time*, ed. Halil İnalcık and Cemal Kafadar (Istanbul: Isis Press, 1993), 109–20; Mehmet İpşirli, "Osmanlı İlmiye Teşkilâtında Mülâzemet Sisteminin Önemi ve Rumeli Kazaskeri Mehmed Efendi Zamanına Ait Mülâzemet Kayıtları," *Güney-Doğu Avrupa Araştırmaları Dergisi* 10–11 (1981–1982): 221–31; Mehmet İpşirli, "Osmanlı İlmiye Mesleği Hakkında Gözlemler, XVI–XVII. Asırlar," *Osmanlı Araştırmaları* 7 (1988): 273–85; Fahri Unan, "Osmanlı İlmiye Tarîkinde

© in this web service Cambridge University Press www.cambridge.org

This term refers to the separate bureaucratic hierarchical structure of scholars that developed after the division in the Ottoman bureaucracy and the creation of a separate hierarchy for scholar-bureaucrats toward the middle of the sixteenth century. Once the *ilmiye* appeared, it existed side by side with the *kalemiye* hierarchy of financial and scribal officials.[17] Thus, using the term *ilmiye* when discussing the developments that took place before the sixteenth century runs the risk of projecting this differentiated bureaucratic structure backward in time, when in fact no such division existed before the mid-sixteenth century.

One might consider using the terms *judiciary* and *jurists* to refer to the group of scholar-bureaucrats in government service.[18] It is true that they were legal experts and could fulfill almost all functions related to the law within and outside the empire's courtrooms. Quite a few scholar-bureaucrats spent all or a substantial part of their careers serving as judges or appointed jurists. But not all of the scholar-bureaucrats undertook judicial or jurisprudential functions; there were many who served as professors or as financial or chancellery officials. Thus, these two terms cannot encompass the entire group of scholar-bureaucrats. In addition, in the case of *jurist*, this title did not necessarily depend on government appointment, so the category may also include scholars who were not scholar-bureaucrats.

Considering all of these factors, the term *scholar-bureaucrats* possesses three advantages for the purposes of this study: (1) it allows precision, in that it refers to all the members of the group studied here and excludes others who are not of central importance in this context;

'Pâye'li Tâyinler Yâhut Devlette Kazanç Kapısı," *Belleten* 62, no. 233 (1998): 41–64; Yasemin Beyazıt, *Osmanlı İlmiyye Mesleğinde İstihdam (XVI. Yüzyıl)* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 2014).

[17] For this, see Josef Matuz, *Das Kanzleiwesen Sultan Süleymans des Prächtigen* (Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner Verlag GmbH, 1974), 33–45; Cornell H. Fleischer, *Bureaucrat and Intellectual in the Ottoman Empire: The Historian Mustafa Âlî, 1541–1600* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1986), 214–31.

[18] For the Ottoman judiciary and jurists, see Engin Deniz Akarlı, "The Ruler and Law Making in the Ottoman Empire," in *Law and Empire: Ideas, Practices, Actors*, ed. Jeroen Duindam, Jill Harries, Caroline Humfress, and Nimrod Hurvitz (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 92–99; Engin Deniz Akarlı, "Law in the Marketplace: Istanbul, 1730–1840," in *Dispensing Justice in Islam: Qadis and Their Judgements*, ed. Muhammad Khalid Masud, Rudolph Peters, and David S. Powers (Leiden: Brill, 2016), 249–51. See also Guy Burak, *The Second Formation of Islamic Law: The Ḥanafī School in the Early Modern Ottoman Empire* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 21–64.

© in this web service Cambridge University Press www.cambridge.org

CAMBRIDGE

Cambridge University Press
978-1-107-17716-1 — Scholars and Sultans in the Early Modern Ottoman Empire
Abdurrahman Atçıl
Excerpt
More Information

(2) it gives an idea about their qualifications, jobs, and mode of affiliation; and (3) it is flexible enough to be used when discussing scholars who served in official government positions from the second half of the fifteenth century to the end of the sixteenth.

Sources

Not many written sources from the period attest the history of scholars in Ottoman lands during the fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries. Researchers have necessarily made do with the occasional notes in Ibn Battuta's (d. 1368/69) *Tuhfa al-Nuzzar* about the scholars he met during his travels in Anatolia,[19] several endowment deeds for madrasas,[20] a few official documents,[21] and scattered biographical or autobiographical notes about scholars in various sources.[22] The architectural evidence, however, of surviving madrasas and other buildings[23] can inform educated guesses about investment in educational institutions and about the attitude of rulers toward scholars and scholarly institutions during these years.

From the second half of the fifteenth century, in contrast, a significant number of written sources about scholars remain extant. The histories of the Ottoman dynasty, the production of which started in the last decades of the fifteenth century, included notes related to scholars in the Ottoman realm.[24] In addition, quite a few imperial decrees, endowment deeds, and official documents of various types,

[19] Ibn Battuta, *İbn Battûta Seyahatnâmesi*, trans. A. Sait Aykut, 2 vols. (Istanbul: Yapı Kredi Yayınları, 2004).

[20] For example, see Mustafa Bilge, *İlk Osmanlı Medreseleri* (Istanbul: Edebiyat Fakültesi, 1984), 209–305.

[21] For example, see İsmail Hakkı Uzunçarşılı, "Osmanlı Tarihine Ait Yeni Bir Vesikanın Ehemmiyeti ve İzahı ve Bu Münasebetle Osmanlılarda İlk Vezirlere Dair Mutalea," *Belleten* 3 (1939): 99–106.

[22] For example, Abdurrahman Bistami, *Durra Taj al-Rasa'il* (Nuruosmaniye Kütüphanesi, no. 4905).

[23] For example, see Machiel Kiel's study of surviving early Ottoman buildings in the Balkans, "The Incorporation of the Balkans into the Ottoman Empire, 1353–1453," in *The Cambridge History of Turkey*, vol. 1: *Byzantium to Turkey, 1071–1453*, ed. Kate Fleet (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 138–91.

[24] Halil İnalcık, "The Rise of Ottoman Historiography," in *Historians of the Middle East*, ed. Bernard Lewis and P. M. Holt (London: Oxford University Press, 1962), 152–67; Feridun Emecen, "Osmanlı Kronikleri ve Biyografi," *İslam Araştırmaları Dergisi* 3 (1999): 83–90.

© in this web service Cambridge University Press www.cambridge.org

CAMBRIDGE

Cambridge University Press
978-1-107-17716-1 — Scholars and Sultans in the Early Modern Ottoman Empire
Abdurrahman Atçıl
Excerpt
More Information

which might include information about scholars from this time, have been preserved.[25] Furthermore, the architectural evidence in most cases can supplement and confirm the written sources.

Beginning in the first decades of the sixteenth century, a flurry of official documents and registers providing information about scholars was produced.[26] Some of these are introduced or analyzed for the first time in this book.[27] It seems that from the 1540s onward, regular day registers (*ruznamçe*) recording new initiates to government service (novices/*mülazım*) and others recording appointments and promotions were introduced and kept in the office of the chief judge (*kadıasker*) of Rumeli.[28] The abundance of official documents from the sixteenth century, including regular registers, makes it easier to corroborate the information gleaned from the historical accounts, as well as from other written sources and architectural evidence.

During the sixteenth century, a new type of source for the history of scholars in the Ottoman realm appeared. In *Al-Shaqaʾiq al-Nuʿmaniyya fi ʿUlama al-Dawla al-ʿUthmaniyya*,[29] Ahmed Taşköprizade (d. 1561) adopted the genre of biographical dictionary to write the history of scholars and Sufis in Ottoman lands in

25 Robert Anhegger and Halil İnalcık, eds., *Ḳānūnnāme-i Sulṭānī ber Mūceb-i ʿÖrf-i ʿOsmani: II. Mehmed ve II. Bayezid Devirlerine Ait Yasaḳnāme ve Ḳānūnnāmeler (*Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1956); *II. Bayezid Vakfiyesi (Istanbul)* (Vakıflar Genel Müdürlüğü Arşivi, no. 1375, Kasa 130); Tahsin Öz, *Zwei Stiftungsurkunden des Sultans Mehmed II. Fatih* (Istanbul: Das Archäologische Institut des Deutschen Reiches, 1935).

26 For example, see Ömer Lutfi Barkan, "İstanbul Sarayları'na Ait Muhasebe Defterleri," *Belgeler* 9 (1979): 296–380; Bilgin Aydın and Rıfat Günalan, "XVI. Yüzyılda Osmanlı Devleti'nde Mevleviyet Kadıları," in *Prof. Dr. Şevket Nezihi Aykut Armağanı*, ed. Gülden Sarıyıldız et al. (Istanbul: Etkin Kitaplar, 2011), 19–34.

27 For example, TSMA, D. 5605.1; D. 8823.1.

28 Cahid Baltacı, "Kâdî-asker Rûz-nâmçeleri'nin Tarihî ve Kültürel Ehemmiyeti," *İslam Medeniyeti Mecmuası* 4, no.1 (1980): 55–100; İsmail Erünsal, "Nuruosmaniye Kütüphânesinde Bulunan Kazasker Ruznamçeleri," *İslam Medeniyeti Mecmuası* 4, no. 3 (1980): 19–31. For a recent study analyzing ten day registers of the chief judge of Rumeli from the sixteenth century, see Beyazıt, *Osmanlı İlmiyye Mesleğinde İstihdam*. It is not known whether the office of chief judge of Anatolia produced comparable day registers during the sixteenth century, as no example of them is currently available. See also Cahid Baltacı, "Hadâiku'ş-şakâik ve Hadâiku'l-hakâik'te Bulunmayan Ulemâ Hakkında Notlar," *İslam Medeniyeti Mecmuası* 4, no. 2 (1979): 54–65.

29 Ahmed Taşköprizade, *Al-Shaqaʾiq al-Nuʿmaniyya fi ʿUlama al-Dawla al-ʿUthmaniyya*, ed. Ahmed Subhi Furat (Istanbul: İstanbul Üniversitesi Edebiyat Fakültesi Yayınları, 1985); hereafter, SHAQAʾIQ.

© in this web service Cambridge University Press www.cambridge.org

CAMBRIDGE

Cambridge University Press
978-1-107-17716-1 — Scholars and Sultans in the Early Modern Ottoman Empire
Abdurrahman Atçıl
Excerpt
More Information

Arabic.[30] He collected information about the scholars and Sufis who lived in, passed through, or died in the Ottoman realm from the beginning of the Ottoman enterprise until his completion of *Al-Shaqaʾiq* in 1558 and recorded their lives using written sources, orally transmitted reports, his personal memories, and the memories of his friends and relatives. As *Al-Shaqaʾiq* includes a great deal of information about scholars that cannot be acquired from any other written or unwritten sources, it is probably the most significant source available attesting the history of scholars during the period covered in this book, 1300–1600. Nonetheless, one must not overlook the fact that writing in Istanbul in the middle of the sixteenth century, Taşköprizade reflected some of the interests of scholars in the Ottoman center and tended to project the realities of his century backward in *Al-Shaqaʾiq*.[31]

Al-Shaqaʾiq quickly became popular among the reading public in the Ottoman realm. Several scholars abridged it, and others translated it into Turkish.[32] Mecdi Mehmed's (d. 1590/91) translation, *Hadaʾiq al-Shaqaʾiq*, later came to be considered the most successful of all the translations.[33] Scholars such as Aşık Çelebi (d. 1572) and Ali bin Bali

[30] For the genre of biographical dictionary, see Wadad al-Qadi, "Biographical Dictionaries as the Scholars' Alternative History of the Muslim Community," in *Organizing Knowledge: Encyclopedic Activities in the Pre-Eighteenth Century Islamic World*, ed. Gerhard Endress (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 23–75; cf. Chase F. Robinson, *Islamic Historiography* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 66–74. *Al-Shaqaʾiq* as a biographical dictionary differed from its predecessors in organizing the history of scholars and Sufis according the timeline of the rulers' reigns. For this, see Abdurrahman Atçıl, "'Osmanlı Devleti'nin Ulemâsı' / Osmanlı Âlim-Bürokratlar Sınıfı (1453–1600)," *Osmanlı'da İlim ve Fikir Dünyası: İstanbul'un Fethinden Süleymaniye Medreselerinin Kuruluşuna Kadar*, ed. Ömer Mahir Alper and Mustakim Arıcı (Istanbul: Klasik, 2015), 265–82.

[31] Ali Anooshahr, "Writing, Speech, and History for an Ottoman Biographer," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 69 (2010): 43–62; Burak, *The Second Formation of Islamic Law*, 94–98; Aslı Niyazioğlu, "In the Dream Realm of a Sixteenth-Century Ottoman Biographer: Taşköprizade and the Sufi Shaykhs," *Sufism and Society: Arrangements of the Mystical in the Muslim World, 1200–1800*, ed. John J. Curry and Erik S. Ohlander (New York: Routledge, 2012), 243–57. See also Atçıl, "Osmanlı Devleti'nin Uleması."

[32] For several copies of *Al-Shaqaʾiq* from the sixteenth century and copies of its abridgements and translations, see Behçet Gönül, "İstanbul Kütüphânelerinde Al-Şaḳâʾiḳ al-Nuʿmaniya Tercüme ve Zeyilleri," *Türkiyat Mecmuası* 7–8 (1945): 136–55.

[33] Mecdi Mehmed Efendi, *Hadaʾiq al-Shaqaʾiq*, ed. Abdülkadir Özcan (Istanbul: Çağrı Yayınları, 1989); hereafter, MECDI.

© in this web service Cambridge University Press www.cambridge.org