

Scholars and Sultans in the Early Modern Ottoman Empire

During the early Ottoman period (1300–1453), scholars in the empire carefully kept their distance from the ruling class. This changed with the capture of Constantinople. From 1453 to 1600, the Ottoman government coopted large groups of scholars, usually more than a thousand at a time, and employed them in a hierarchical bureaucracy to fulfill educational, legal, and administrative tasks. Abdurrahman Atçıl explores the factors that brought about this gradual transformation of scholars into scholar-bureaucrats, including the deliberate legal, bureaucratic, and architectural actions of the Ottoman sultans and their representatives, scholars' own participation in shaping the rules governing their status and careers, and domestic and international events beyond the control of either group.

ABDURRAHMAN ATÇIL is Assistant Professor and a fellow of the Brain Circulation Scheme, co-funded by the European Research Council and the Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey, at Istanbul Şehir University. He also holds an assistant professorship in Arabic and Islamic studies at Queens College, City University of New York.

Cambridge University Press

978-1-107-17716-1 — Scholars and Sultans in the Early Modern Ottoman Empire

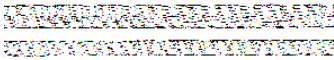
Abdurrahman Atçıl

Frontmatter

[More Information](#)

Scholars and Sultans in the Early Modern Ottoman Empire

ABDURRAHMAN ATÇIL



Cambridge University Press
978-1-107-17716-1 — Scholars and Sultans in the Early Modern Ottoman Empire
Abdurrahman Atçıl
Frontmatter
[More Information](#)

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

University Printing House, Cambridge CB2 8BS, United Kingdom
One Liberty Plaza, 20th Floor, New York, NY 10006, USA
477 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne, VIC 3207, Australia
4843/24, 2nd Floor, Ansari Road, Daryaganj, Delhi – 110002, India
79 Anson Road, #06–04/06, Singapore 079906

Cambridge University Press is part of the University of Cambridge.

It furthers the University's mission by disseminating knowledge in the pursuit of education, learning and research at the highest international levels of excellence.

www.cambridge.org

Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9781107177161

© Abdurrahman Atçıl 2017

This publication is in copyright. Subject to statutory exception and to the provisions of relevant collective licensing agreements, no reproduction of any part may take place without the written permission of Cambridge University Press.

First published 2017

Printed in the United Kingdom by Clays, St Ives plc

A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library

ISBN 978-1-107-17716-1 Hardback

Cambridge University Press has no responsibility for the persistence or accuracy of URLs for external or third-party internet websites referred to in this publication, and does not guarantee that any content on such websites is, or will remain, accurate or appropriate.

Cambridge University Press

978-1-107-17716-1 — Scholars and Sultans in the Early Modern Ottoman Empire

Abdurrahman Atçıl

Frontmatter

[More Information](#)

*To my parents,
Hakkı Atçıl and Sevim Atçıl*

Cambridge University Press

978-1-107-17716-1 — Scholars and Sultans in the Early Modern Ottoman Empire

Abdurrahman Atçıl

Frontmatter

[More Information](#)

Contents

<i>List of Tables</i>	<i>page</i> ix
<i>Notes on Usage</i>	x
<i>Acknowledgments</i>	xii
Introduction	1
Part I Scholars during the Early Ottoman Period (1300–1453)	
1 Post-Mongol Realities in Anatolia and the Ottomans	17
2 Madrasas and Scholars in Ottoman Lands	28
Part II The Formation of the Hierarchy (1453–1530)	
3 Introducing the Ottoman Empire	49
4 Scholars in Mehmed II’s Nascent Imperial Bureaucracy (1453–1481)	59
5 Scholar-Bureaucrats Realize Their Power (1481–1530)	83
Part III The Consolidation of the Hierarchy (1530–1600)	
6 The Focus of Attention Changes	119
7 The Ascendance of Dignitary Scholar-Bureaucrats (<i>Mevali</i>)	134
8 The Growth and Extension of the Hierarchy	145
9 The Rules and Patterns of Differentiation among Scholar-Bureaucrats	170
10 The Integration of Scholar-Bureaucrats in Multiple Career Tracks	188
Conclusion	212
	vii

Cambridge University Press

978-1-107-17716-1 — Scholars and Sultans in the Early Modern Ottoman Empire

Abdurrahman Atçıl

Frontmatter

[More Information](#)

viii

Contents

Glossary

223

Bibliography

227

Index

251

Tables

2.1 Madrasas constructed in Ottoman lands during the early Ottoman period	<i>page 29</i>
2.2 Royal-prestige madrasas in Ottoman lands during the early Ottoman period	31
2.3 Distribution of madrasas in Anatolia and Rumeli during the early Ottoman period	32
5.1 Types of novices (<i>mülazıms</i>) during the first quarter of the sixteenth century	105
5.2 Paths of entrance to government service for scholar-bureaucrats in the first quarter of the sixteenth century	108
8.1 Promotion of professors to the Prince Mehmed and Selim I Madrasas during the sixteenth century	148
8.2 Last positions held by professors before appointment to the Süleymaniye madrasas during the sixteenth century	149
8.3 Last positions held by professors before appointment to one of the Sahn madrasas in the sixteenth century	151
8.4 Promotion of professors from Rüstem Pasha Madrasa in Istanbul in the sixteenth century	152
10.1 Profession/status of the fathers of scholar-bureaucrats in the lower career track of dignitaries	199
10.2 Profession/status of the fathers of scholar-bureaucrats in the upper career track of dignitaries	210

Notes on Usage

Arabic, Persian, and Turkish words listed in the *Oxford English Dictionary* appear in this book without italics – hence, Qur'an, ulema, shah, Sunna, hadith, sheikh, sharia, ghazi, hajj, pasha, and vizier. However, madrasa (set in roman), *vakf* (italics), and *fetva* (italics) are used instead of madrasah, waqf, and fatwa.

Arabic and Persian terms, texts, and book titles are fully transliterated without macrons and diacritics, except that *hamza* (ء) – when it is in the middle of a word – and *ʿayn* (ع) are shown with ʿ and ʿ respectively. Thus, *Al-Shaqaʿiq al-Nuʿmaniyya*, *Qamus al-Muhit*, and *mihna*. Ottoman Turkish texts and terms are rendered according to modern Turkish orthography: *kanun*, *kadiasker*, *mevali*, *ilmiye*, and *mülazemet*. Long Turkish vowels (â and î) are used only in cases where confusion may occur, such *vâkıf* and Mustafa Âlî. As for those terms that may be used in both Arabic and Ottoman Turkish contexts, Turkish renderings are given in the text (e.g., *vakfiye*, *fetva*, *vakf*, *kadı*, *müfti*), and both Arabic and Turkish appear in the Glossary and Index. Plurals of non-English terms use the English plural suffix *s* (e.g., *kasabat kadıs*, *kadiaskers*, *mülazıms*, and *vakfiyes*), except for the plural word *mevali*, the singular form of which (*mevla*) never appears in this study.

Arabic and Persian personal names are normally fully transliterated – for instance, Abu Hanifa, al-Muʿayyad, and Ibn ʿArabi. However, if the context relates to Anatolia or the Ottoman dynasty, all personal names appear in their modern Turkish rendering, as in Molla Hüsrev, Ebussuud, Seyyid Şerif Cürçani, and Sadeddin Taftazani. The modern Turkish version of place-names is used (e.g., Konya, Ankara, and Manisa) unless there is an established anglicized form, as there is for Istanbul, Cairo, Damascus, Medina, Mecca, Aleppo, Anatolia, Nishapur, Merv, Samarkand, Baghdad, Herat, Khorasan, and Transoxiana.

All dates are given according to the Common Era. In cases of lunar dates for which the month is not known, the lunar year may extend

into two years of the Common Era. Then, the two years are shown with a virgule (/). For example, 1548/49 is given for the lunar year 955.

The following abbreviations are used throughout the book:

ATAYI	Nevizade Atayi, <i>Hada'iq al-Haqa'iq</i> , ed. Abdülkadir Özcan (Istanbul: Çağrı Yayınları, 1989)
EI ²	<i>Encyclopaedia of Islam</i> , 2nd ed. (online)
KANUNNAME	<i>Kânûnnâme-i Âl-i Osman</i> , ed. and transliterated by Abdülkadir Özcan (Istanbul: Kitabevi, 2003)
MECDI	Mecdi Mehmed Efendi, <i>Hada'iq al-Shaqa'iq</i> , ed. Abdülkadir Özcan (Istanbul: Çağrı Yayınları, 1989)
SHAQA'IQ	Ahmed Taşköprizade, <i>Al-Shaqa'iq al-Nu'maniyya fi 'Ulama al-Dawla al-'Uthmaniyya</i> , ed. Ahmed Subhi Furat (Istanbul: İstanbul Üniversitesi Edebiyat Fakültesi Yayınları, 1985)
SK	Süleymaniye Kütüphanesi
TDVIA	<i>Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslam Ansiklopedisi</i> (online)
T SMA	Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi Arşivi (Topkapı Palace Museum Archive)
TSMK	Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi Kütüphanesi (Topkapı Palace Museum Library)

Acknowledgments

My interest in the topic of this book started when I was a Master's student in Bilkent University's History Department between 1999 and 2002. Since then, I have studied, conducted research, or taught at several educational and research institutions: the University of Chicago, Harvard University, Queens College of City University of New York (CUNY), Istanbul Şehir University, American University in Cairo, the Center for Islamic Studies in Istanbul (İSAM), the Foundation for Sciences and Arts in Istanbul (BİSAV), the American Research Institute in Turkey (ARIT), the Süleymaniye Library, the Prime Minister's Archive in Istanbul, the Topkapı Palace Museum Archive and Library, the Archive of Directorate General of Foundations in Ankara, Müftülük Archive and Library in Istanbul, and Dar al-Kutub in Cairo. Bilkent University, the University of Chicago, Harvard University, Queens College, the Andrew Mellon Foundation, the National Endowment for the Humanities-ARIT, the European Research Council–Scientific and Research Council of Turkey (TÜBİTAK) (BİDEB 2236–114C009), and the Turkish Academy of Sciences (TÜBA) financially supported my studies and research. I thank these institutions and their personnel for making my research possible.

During the researching and writing of this book, I benefited from the guidance, knowledge, mentorship, and friendship of a multitude of people. I am grateful to all of them but will name only a few of them here. Special gratitude is due to my PhD adviser, mentor, and *abi*, Cornell H. Fleischer, for his erudite advice, encouragement, help, patience, and confidence in my work. His generosity with his knowledge, time, and friendship has humbled me and continues to do so. I am indebted to Engin D. Akarlı for providing me with a perfect model of academic integrity and excellence and for supporting me and my work since our first meeting in 2004. A. Holly Shissler and Eugenia Kermeli have always been willing to give academic, professional, and personal advice and played critical roles in my academic and

Acknowledgments

xiii

professional development. I was so fortunate to have William McClure, who never failed to encourage, help, and support me, as my supervisor and mentor at Queens College.

I wish to express my sincere gratitude to the professors who taught me to read and interpret historical sources and to think with a historical perspective, as well as to those who contributed to the development of this book in many different ways: Ali Akyıldız, M. Akif Aydın, Bilgin Aydın, Orit Bashkin, Arif Bilgin, Tufan Buzpınar, Robert Dankoff, Fred M. Donner, Muhammad S. Eissa, Feridun Emecen, İhsan Fazlıoğlu, Nejdet Gök, Colin Heywood, Halil İnalçık, Mehmet İpşirli, Baber Johansen, Wadad Kadi, Cemal Kafadar, Ahmet T. Karamustafa, Hakan Karateke, İlhan Kutluer, Joel Lidov, the late Farouk Mustafa, Oktay Özel, Erol Özvar, Judith Pfeiffer, Chase F. Robinson, and John E. Woods.

It gives me a great pleasure to thank many colleagues and friends who showed an interest in and shared their ideas with me on this project: Mehmetcan Akpınar, M. Zahit Atçıl, James E. Baldwin, Jonathan Brown, Osman Baş, Tuncay Başoğlu, İ. Evrim Binbaş, M. Talha Çiçek, Garrett Davidson, Ali Erken, Hasan Karataş, Özgür Kavak, E. Said Kaya, Seyfi Kenan, Abdülhamit Kırmızı, Kasım Kopuz, Hızır M. Köse, Emin Lelić, Christopher A. Markiewicz, Güngör Öğüt, Ertuğrul Ökten, Ferruh Özpilavcı, İ. Kaya Şahin, A. Tunç Şen, Himmet Taşkömür, Kenan Tekin, Yunus Uğur, and Nükhet Varlık.

I presented parts or earlier versions of this book at the University of Chicago, Harvard University, Columbia University, Istanbul Şehir University, Istanbul Medeniyet University, Istanbul University, the University of Tübingen, and BİSAV, as well as at the annual meeting of the Middle East Association of North America and at the annual conference of American Association of Teachers of Turkic Languages, and received useful feedback. I am grateful to all who thought about this work and shared their ideas with me.

I am deeply indebted to Professors Cornell H. Fleischer, Engin D. Akarlı, and Ahmet T. Karamustafa and to two anonymous reviewers who carefully read a draft of this book and saved me from many embarrassing mistakes. I also would like to thank M. Zahit Atçıl, Ertuğrul Ökten, Ferenc Csirkés, Nükhet Varlık, Gürzat Kami, Hugh Jefferson Turner, Pdraic Rohan, and Rebecca Loumiotis for reading earlier versions of parts of this work and for making critical interventions. Any remaining errors are, of course, mine.

I am delighted to thank Cambridge University Press editors William Masami Hammell and Maria Marsh for their interest and support. Thanks are also due to Claire Sissen and Arindam Bose, who provided help during the production process of the manuscript.

I must acknowledge that were it not for the unconditional love, support, and encouragement of my parents, Hakkı Atçıl and Sevim Atçıl, I would never have trodden the path of knowledge. I cannot express my gratitude to them in words. I would also like to warmly thank my parents-in-law, Haluk Bilyay and Hatice Sonad Bilyay, for their love and support and all the sacrifices that they have made on my behalf. Let me finally thank my wife, Elif Zeynep, and my daughter, Münire Sevim, for gently sharing my burden and for keeping me on track with their love, joy, and patience throughout the research and writing of this book.