

POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC TRANSITION OF OTTOMAN SOVEREIGNTY FROM A SOLE MONARCH TO NUMEROUS OTTOMAN ELITES ETWEEN 1683 AND 1750S

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Abstract

The purpose of this paper is to explore the Ottoman transformation that took place immediately after empire's great defeat at the siege of Vienna in 1683. There is no doubt that this debacle forced the state to reconsider and alter not only its economic but also political behaviour. It was due to this very reason that we see a new redistribution of power that opened the way for new Ottoman strata between the second siege of Vienna and the second half of the eighteenth century. This transition can be classified into three distinct steps, which allow us to understand Ottoman power transition from a single one to plentiful ones, including Muslim and non-Muslim nobilities of the Ottoman state. The first phase of periodization encompassing the years between 1683 and 1699 the power of Muslim elites took the upper hand to the detriment of Ottoman monarchs. The second periodization covering the years between the Peace of Karlowitz and Patrona Rebellion of 1730, Mustafa II and mostly Ahmed III endeavoured to restore the sultanic authority to no avail. In the third and last stage, roughly embracing the years between 1730 and 1750s, non-Muslim nobilities of the Ottoman Empire slowly but surely started to gain first with the aid of Mahmud I and then that of foreign states. At the end of the day, by the second half of the eighteenth century both the Ottoman sultans had lost their power and influence and new Muslim and non-Muslim elites had emerged. More importantly though, these new groups were not only eager to fight but also cooperate with one another in order to get more from the new distribution of power within the state.

Keywords: Ottoman Empire, Sovereignities, Muslim and non-Muslim elites Distribution of Power and Wealth, Millet System