

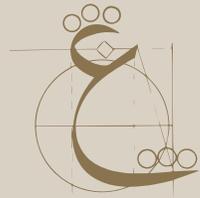
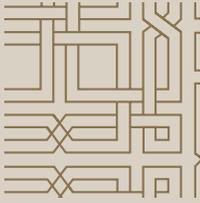


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04



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An Ottoman Imperial City in Transition: Transformation of Urban Governance in Edirne (18th -19th Centuries)

GEÇİŞ DÖNEMİNDE
BİR OSMANLI PAYİTAHTI:
EDİRNE'NİN KENT
YÖNETİMİNDEKİ DÖNÜŞÜM
(18. VE 19. YÜZYILLAR)



GÜRER KARAGEDİKLİ*

ABSTRACT

Modern historiography has a consensus over Edirne's well-established socio-spatial and political position that reached its peak during the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. In this period, the city gained a de facto capital status as consecutive Ottoman sultans permanently resided in Edirne. While the physical presence of the Ottoman sultans and imperial institutions in Edirne brought about a spatial and demographic stability to the city until the late eighteenth century, Edirne witnessed major transformations through new imperial implementations throughout the nineteenth century. Furthermore, the new reforms brought about the proportional participation of city dwellers in the city's governance, including the non-Muslims. Based on Ottoman archival sources and Muslim court registers of Edirne, the present paper investigates how the reforms of the nineteenth century transformed this "imperial city" vis-à-vis its urban governance. The paper suggests that in the nineteenth century Edirne was not the same imperial city governed in a more autonomous way in the eighteenth century anymore. However, it will be argued, while centralization efforts meant that military, administrative and financial responsibilities in the administration of provinces were converged, now as a provincial, sub-provincial and district center, Edirne maintained its position in the Tanzimat era when a more participatory system in this ethno-religiously diverse city formed.

Keywords: Ottoman Empire, Edirne, Urban Governance, Transformation, non-Muslims.



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* Dr. Öğretim Görevlisi, Orta Doğu Teknik Üniversitesi, Fen-Edebiyat Fakültesi, Tarih Bölümü, gurur@metu.edu.tr, ORCID: 0000-0001-7846-6052.

ÖZ

Modern tarihyazımı Edirne'nin sosyo-mekânsal ve politik pozisyonunun 17. ve erken 18. yüzyıllarda en üst seviyeye ulaştığı konusunda fikir birliğine sahiptir. Bu dönemde, Osmanlı padişahları art arda kalıcı olarak Edirne'de ikamet ettiklerinden, şehir adeta bir de facto başkent statüsü kazanmıştır. Osmanlı sultanlarının fiziki varlığı ve imparatorluk kurumları şehre 18. yüzyıl sonuna kadar mekansal ve demografik stabilite getirmişse de, Edirne 19. yüzyıl boyunca devam eden modern reformlar yoluyla ciddi değişiklikler yaşadığı bir şehir haline almaya başlamıştır. İlaveten, yeni reformlar kent yönetimine gayrimüslimler dahil şehir sakinlerinin oransal katılımını da beraberinde getirmiştir. Osmanlı arşiv belgeleri ve Edirne şer'iyye sicillerinin temel kaynak olarak kullanıldığı bu çalışma, 19. yüzyılda gerçekleşen bu reformların Edirne gibi bir payitahta kentsel yönetimi nasıl dönüştürdüğünü araştırmaktadır. Elinizdeki çalışma, 19. Yüzyıl Edirne'sinin, artık 18. yüzyılda kendine has kurumlara daha otonom şekilde idare edilen payitahtıyla aynı olmadığı önerisinde bulunacaktır. Ne var ki askeri, idari ve finansal konuları bir araya getiren merkezleşme çabalarının vilayet, sancak ve kaza merkezi olan Edirne'nin Balkanlardaki önemli pozisyonunu etnik ve dini olarak daha katılımcı bir sistemin ihdas edildiği Tanzimat döneminde de sürdürmesine yardımcı olduğu iddia edilecektir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Osmanlı İmparatorluğu, Edirne, Kent İdaresi, Dönüşüm, Gayrimüslim.

INTRODUCTION

The Ottoman central authorities paid much special attention to certain cities due to their historical and political statuses. Edirne, one of the three Ottoman imperial seats, is of this sort. A highly venerated urban center that was the second imperial city of the Ottoman Sultans prior to the conquest of Istanbul, Edirne was administered differently and given special attention due to its different status acknowledged both by the royal family and higher echelons of the state. During the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, it was adorned by the members of the royal family and the ruling elite. Furthermore, as modern historiography has a consensus, the city's well-established socio-spatial and political position reached its peak during the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. In this period, the city gained a *de facto* capital status as consecutive Ottoman Sultans permanently resided in Edirne which witnessed the presence of high-ranking state officials and representatives of various European powers. As far as the social composition and administration are concerned, urban governance did not change much in the imperial city of Edirne until the eighteenth century, though this would change significantly in the nineteenth century when the state attempted to apply a wide range of reforms to reorganize urban structures in the city of Edirne while these in return that expressed different forms of imperial manifestation. While the physical presence of the Ottoman Sultans and imperial institutions in Edirne brought about spatial and demographic stability in the city until the late eighteenth century, Edirne witnessed major alterations through new imperial implementations throughout the nineteenth century. As far as the governance of the city is concerned, until the abolition of the Janissary corps in 1826 the "imperial gardener" (*bostancıbaşı*) located in the New Imperial Palace of Edirne (*Saray-ı Cedid*) secured the public order in and around Edirne. Thereafter, within a decade or so, a new phase began in the city's political life as provincial governors became responsible for its administration. The present paper offers a long-durée analysis of the city of Edirne where empire-wide reforms shaped the city in the nineteenth century. The Edirne of the nineteenth century was not the same imperial city that was governed in a more autonomous way in the eighteenth century anymore, although it never lost its importance. The newly established institutions following the Tanzimat reforms brought about the proportional representation of city dwellers in the city's governance including its non-Muslims, which made the urban governance more participatory.

1. Edirne in Modern Historiography: An Overview

Due to its political status as an imperial seat, Edirne has been one of the Ottoman cities that received constant scholarly attention.¹ Although few works concerning Edirne's history have dealt with the pre-Byzantine or Byzantine period,² the scholarly attention of mainly

1 Within the last three decades, Edirne has been the subject of three different collected volumes. See *Edirne'nin 600. Fethi Yıldönümü Armağan Kitabı* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1993); Emin Nedret İşli - Sabri Koz (ed.), *Edirne: Serhattaki Payitaht* (Istanbul: Yapı Kredi Yayınları, 1998); Birgit Krawietz, Florian Riedler (ed.), *The Heritage of Edirne in Ottoman and Turkish Times* (Berlin and Boston: Walter de Gruyter, 2020).

2 Şevket Aziz Kansu, "Edirne'nin Tarihöncesine Ait Araştırmalar", *Edirne'nin 600. Fethi Yıldönümü Armağan Kitabı* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1993), 13-20; Semavi Eyice, "Bizans Devrinde Edirne ve Eserleri", *Edirne'nin 600. Fethi Yıldönümü Armağan Kitabı* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1993), 39-76.

Turkish scholars has been more focused on the Ottoman period which can be divided into three major phases. The first phase starts with the Ottoman conquest of Edirne³ and includes its consequent integration into the Ottoman administration from the fifteenth through the mid-sixteenth century.⁴ Very recently, further research has broadened our understanding of early Ottoman Edirne and the formation of its urban space.⁵ The second line of historical inquiry with respect to the history of Edirne has been around the last decades of the Ottoman Empire when the city faced political upheavals and invasions.⁶

Interestingly, even though few scholars have engaged with the new structures that appeared in the city during its golden days in the sixteenth century when both the royal family and higher echelons of the state officials invested in flourishing Edirne,⁷ the long period between early Ottoman and very late Ottoman Edirne has been neglected. Even in the most recent volume that brought together very important contributions, there is only one article concerning the city's history in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, which is about the diplomatic and economic presence of Ragusans in Edirne.⁸ Very recently though, the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries of Edirne have been the subject of scholarly research. In them, the history of Edirne in these two centuries has been analyzed not only in a line parallel with the general historiographical narrative of the Ottoman Empire but also in accordance with the unique political processes that the city went through.⁹ Throughout the seventeenth century, the Ottoman sultans – particularly Mehmed IV and Mustafa II – preferred to reside in Edirne rather than staying in İstanbul which became the fortune of the city as these long sojourns of the sultans made the seventeenth century the “golden period” for Edirne.¹⁰ These very recent studies explain the city's increasing population and popularity among state officials, traders, and even foreign embassies in relation with the presence of the Ottoman sultans that created a golden period for Edirne in the second half of the seventeenth century and the first decades of the eighteenth, until the Edirne Incident of 1703.

Without exception, almost all of the scholarly works dealing with seventeenth-and-eighteenth-century Edirne repeated the same narrative that Edirne's decline began following the

- 3 Halil İnalçık, “Edirne'nin Fethi (1361)”, *Edirne'nin 600. Fethi Yıldönümü Armağan Kitabı* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1993), 137-159. Also see E. Zachariadou, “The Conquest of Adrianople by the Turks”, *Studi Veneziani* 12 (1970), 210-217.
- 4 Tayyip Gökbilgin, *XV. ve XVI. Asırlarda Edirne ve Paşa Livası, Vakıflar-Mülkler-Mukataalar* (İstanbul: İşaret Yayınları, 2007).
- 5 Amy Singer, “In Search of Early Ottoman Edirne”, *The Heritage of Edirne in Ottoman and Turkish Times*, ed. Birgit Krawietz - Florian Riedler (Berlin and Boston: Walter de Gruyter, 2020), 25-43; Panagiotis Kontolaimos, “The Formation of Early Ottoman Urban Space. Edirne as Paradigm” *The Heritage of Edirne in Ottoman and Turkish Times*, ed. Birgit Krawietz - Florian Riedler (Berlin and Boston: Walter de Gruyter, 2020) 44-66; M. Sait Özervarlı, “Connecting Capitals. Edirne Among Early Ottoman Scholarly Destinations”, *The Heritage of Edirne in Ottoman and Turkish Times*, 67-87.
- 6 Bekir Sıtkı Baykal, “Edirne'nin Uğramış Olduğu İstilâlar”, *Edirne'nin 600. Fethi Yıldönümü Armağan Kitabı* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1993), 178-198.
- 7 M.T. Gökbilgin, *Edirne ve Paşa Livası*; M.T. Gökbilgin, “Edirne Şehrinin Kurucuları”, *Edirne'nin 600. Fethi Yıldönümü Armağan Kitabı* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1993), 161-178; Ahmet Yiğit, *XVI. Yüzyılın İkinci Yarısında Edirne Kazası*, (Malatya: İnönü University, Institute of Social Sciences, PhD Thesis, 1988).
- 8 Vjeran Kursar, “The Diplomatic, Religious, and Economic Presence of the Republic of Dubrovnik (Ragusa) in Ottoman Edirne”, *The Heritage of Edirne in Ottoman and Turkish Times*, ed. Birgit Krawietz - Florian Riedler (Berlin and Boston: Walter de Gruyter, 2020), 302-343.
- 9 Güler Karagedikli, “Bir Payitahtı Yeniden Düşünmek: 18. Yüzyıl Başlarında Edirne Şehrinin Sosyal ve Mekansal Yapısı Üzerine Bazı Gözlemler”, *Prof. Dr. Özer Ergeççe Armağan*, ed. Ümit Ekin (İstanbul: Bilgi Kültür Sanat, 2013), 221-231.
- 10 Güler Karagedikli, “Bir Payitahtı Yeniden Düşünmek”; Güler Karagedikli, “A Study on Rural Space, Land and Socio-Agrarian Structure in Ottoman Edirne, 1613-1670,” (Ankara: Middle East Technical University, Institute of Social Sciences, PhD Thesis, 2017).

1703 Edirne Incident (*Edirne vak'ası*), after which the Ottoman Sultans ceased to reside in the city for very long periods. After the 1703 Edirne Incident that brought about the return of the Imperial Seat to İstanbul with the abdication of Sultan Mustafa II, two calamities within a decade, the Great Fire of 1742 and the Great Earthquake of 1752 were also underlined by modern historiography's depiction of Ottoman Edirne's decline in the eighteenth century.¹¹ Indeed, one may conceivably assert that the city of Edirne faced a demographic "decline" by the fourth decade of the eighteenth century. Previously due to the presence of the Sultan and his household in Edirne, the city had witnessed a considerable population increase. However, following the permanent return of the imperial seat to İstanbul, it can be argued that the city in fact found its demographic equilibrium. By systematically and empirically analyzing the entire series of property sale contracts extracted from the eighteenth-century Muslim court registers of Edirne, Karagedikli and Tunçer have shown in their very recent article that the number of property transactions decreased throughout the eighteenth century, which may testify to a decline in the number of people residing in the city.¹² The situation of Edirne in the eighteenth century needs to be analyzed through further empirical examination. However, even though Edirne might have lost a good number of officials that hitherto resided in the Edirne Palace as well as merchants and foreign diplomatic personnel located in Edirne because of the Sultan's presence there, it is wise to say that Edirne still kept its prominent position due to its closeness to İstanbul and its critical location on the intersection of imperial roads. During the entire eighteenth century, Edirne was still the base for the army undertaking military campaigns in Europe. Furthermore, various European traders still chose to settle in Edirne for commercial purposes in the following centuries.¹³

The nineteenth century, however, was rather different. In the beginning of the century, during the reign of Selim III, leading notables rebelled and instigated the "Second Edirne Incident" in 1806. Furthermore, with the so-called "Auspicious Event" of 1826, the Ottoman State abolished the Janissary corps stationed in every city throughout the empire. In fact, the abolition of the Janissary corps brought about a new phase in the administration of the cities that had been controlled by the "Imperial Gardener" (*bostancıbaşısı*). Edirne had homed a significant number of Janissary troops; so that by the abolition of the Janissary corps the city was affected demographically and economically. Following this event, Edirne was devastated in 1829, when the Russian army invaded the city, which would not be the last invasion. In his study, Sadık Emre Karakuş has shown the administrative transitions in Edirne from the last quarter of the eighteenth century until the promulgation of the Tanzimat Edict in 1839. Displaying the smooth shift from the city's sole control by the Imperial Gardener to the control of provincial governors, Karakuş informs us that the city's population did not change much, even though the non-Muslims' proportional prevalence was evident.¹⁴

11 Tayyip Gökbilgin, "Edirne", *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslam Ansiklopedisi* (İstanbul: TDV Yayınları, 1994), 10/425-431; Feridun M. Emecen, "Tarih Koridorlarında Bir Sınır Şehri: Edirne", *Edirne: Serhattaki Payitaht*, ed. Emin Nedret İşli - M. Sabri Koz (İstanbul: Yapı Kredi, 1998), 49-69.

12 Gürer Karagedikli - Ali Coşkun Tunçer, "House Prices in the Ottoman Empire: Evidence From Eighteenth-Century Edirne" *Economic History Review* 74/1 (2021), 6-33.

13 Halil Sahillioğlu, "XVIII. Yüzyılda Edirne'nin Ticari İmkanları," *Belgelerle Türk Tarihi Dergisi*, 13 (1968), 60-68.

14 Sadık Emre Karakuş, *Osmanlı İdaresinde Edirne (1789-1839)* (Elazığ: Fırat University, Institute of Social Sciences, PhD thesis, 2018).

With the Tanzimat reforms that gave way to changes in provincial administration as well as in urban governance, the city witnessed major alterations in urban structure and the way it was administered. In her book, Yonca Köksal analyzes the central state's efforts of reform in the Edirne and Ankara provinces. She underlines that it was state-society relations that defined the outcome of the reform attempts in the local level of administration.¹⁵ In addition, Tevfik Evcı's meticulous investigation shows how provincial councils were formed in the Edirne Province in the second half of the nineteenth century. He elaborates on the structure of the Edirne Municipality that made decisions about the city's needs.¹⁶ Modern historiography has repeatedly underlined that the city was altered significantly under the central government's supervision during the nineteenth century, which was something very different from the previous centuries. The following section will demonstrate this.

2. An Imperial City Transformed: Urban Governance in Edirne from the Early Eighteenth to the Late Nineteenth Century

What happened when the Sultan and his entourage in the imperial palace left Edirne in 1703? How were the cityscape and social composition of the city affected by this in the long eighteenth century? And finally, how did urban governance change in Edirne during the reform period as far as imperial manifestation and representation of different religious groups were concerned? During the pre-Tanzimat period, administrative, judicial and municipal undertakings were in the hands of the local judge (*kadı*) who was the sole responsible for urban governance (at least in theory). The main municipal (*beledi*) undertakings included price controls, regulations of the market, and constructions that needed care such as waterways and bridges were under the jurisdiction of the local judge. Surely, he fulfilled these with the help of other administrative personnel such as a superintendent (*muhtesib*) or chief architect (*mimarbaşı*). Imperial cities like Bursa and Edirne had other important officials that helped the local judge in his responsibilities.

As explained above, the Imperial Gardener and the local judge were the two most important figures among others who had to deal with the city's security, tax and financial matters. During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the Imperial Gardener gained further responsibilities to protect a larger region in the Rumeli Province.¹⁷ Hülya Taş shows that by the late sixteenth century the Imperial Gardener has become the most prominent administrative and military official that held the highest office in the city.¹⁸ Throughout the eighteenth century until the abolition of the Janissary Corps in 1826, there are numerous records in the registers of the local Muslim court in Edirne, ordering the *bostancıbaşı* to

15 Yonca Köksal, *The Ottoman Empire in the Tanzimat Era. Provincial Perspectives Ankara to Edirne* (London: Routledge, 2019).

16 Tevfik Evcı, "Tanzimat Döneminde Edirne (1839-1908)" (Ankara: Hacettepe University, Institute of Social Sciences, PhD thesis, 2019).

17 During the sixteenth century, the city governance was handled by major officials including the local judge (*kadı*), the *subaşı*, *bostancıbaşı*, *yasakçıbaşı*, *muhtesip*, *ases* (the deputy *subaşı* who was responsible for the protection of the city), and *muhzır*. Yiğit, Edirne Kazası, 109-125.

18 Hülya Taş, "Erken Modern Dönemde Bir Yetki Alanı Olarak Edirne Bostancıbaşılığı: 'Kırkayak' Edirne Bostancıbaşısı", *ANKARAD: Anadolu ve Rumeli Araştırmaları Dergisi* 3/5 (2022), 161-192. Also see Karakuş, Osmanlı İdaresinde Edirne, 225.

handle certain matters with extreme diligence. For instance, he was given the duty of ensuring timely arrival of grain or meat, which constituted a portion of Istanbul's provisioning procured from the Edirne region.¹⁹ Furthermore, the *bostancıbaşı* was responsible of the repairment of waterways in Edirne. As part of this duty, in 1750 (H1164), the then *bostancıbaşı* sent a petition to İstanbul warning that the city and the imperial palace would receive no water if water lines were not repaired.²⁰

During the late eighteenth century, one more layer was added to this two-headed administration of the city, and that was the chief of the local notables (*şehir ayânı*). In this period, rebellions in the mountains were very frequent in the Rumeli region which was a source of concern and anxiety for the Ottoman authorities. Since these rebellions were in close proximity to Edirne, the *bostancıbaşı* and the local notable were the two main officeholders to be sent against those who rebelled.²¹ In 1817, the official position of the city notables was abolished. Almost a decade later in 1826 the Janissary Corps were obliterated as well. Only one year after this, the *bostancıbaşı* and the corps he headed were also eliminated. In fact, between 1817 and 1836 the administration of the city was generally bestowed to the governor of Çirmen who was titled as the "Guard of Edirne" (*Edirne muhafızı*).²² In other words, for the first time, a governor was appointed to guard the city of Edirne.

As was the case in the entire empire, the Tanzimat reforms were definitely a turning point for Edirne as well. The centralization efforts of the Ottoman State brought about the abolition of the system of tax-farming which gave way to the formation of new councils for collecting taxes. Called as "Muhassıllık Meclisleri" these councils were the earliest types of local administrative councils which would be more mature after 1864.²³ Due to its important political status, Edirne was among the few provinces where the central state first attempted to realize its reforms.²⁴ The Tanzimat regime's centralization efforts gave way to the establishment of local city councils, which can be regarded as the early forms of modern municipalities. Istanbul being the first, many municipalities were formed in the second half of the nineteenth century.²⁵ Founded in 1858, some of the responsibilities of the Istanbul Municipality (*Şehremaneti*) included the provisioning of the city and making sure that goods were abundant, building roads and sidewalks, controlling the market, cleaning the city, determining the prices, collecting the taxes and sending them to the treasury.²⁶

With the first example established in the imperial capital, especially following the 1867 Provincial Regulations (*Vilayet Nizamnamesi*), the Ottoman State formed municipalities

19 For example, he was ordered that the grain and sheep to be transferred from the port of Rodosto to İstanbul after collecting the entire amount. See Edirne Şer'iyye Sicili (Hereafter EŞS), nr. 140, 91a-1 and EŞS, nr.193, 21b-1.

20 EŞS, nr. 147, 22b-1.

21 Başkanlık Osmanlı Arşivleri (BOA), Cevdet Dahiliye (C.DH.), 92/4584 (H. 11.03.1208), vr.1-2; Cevdet Askeriye (C.AS), 70/3283 (H.29.12.1208), vr.1.

22 BOA, Hatt-ı Hümayun (HAT), 290/17364 (H.29.12.1242), vr. 1. Also see Tayyip Gökbilgin, "Edirne", 10/425-431; Karakuş, *Osmanlı İdaresinde Edirne*, 214-222.

23 Evcı, *Tanzimat Döneminde Edirne*, 23-45.

24 Evcı, *Tanzimat Döneminde Edirne*, 123.

25 Mehmet Seyitdaniloğlu, *Tanzimat Döneminde Modern Belediyeciliğin Doğuşu. Yerel Yönetim Metinleri* (İstanbul: İş Bankası, 2010).

26 Tetsuya Sahara, "The Ottoman City Council and the beginning of the modernization of urban space in the Balkans", *The City in the Ottoman Empire. Migration and the making of urban modernity* ed. Ulrike Freitag et al. (London: Routledge, 2011), 30-32; Also see Tefik Evcı, *Tanzimat Döneminde Edirne*, 126.

in other provinces including the one in Edirne.²⁷ The undertakings provided by the Edirne Municipality included firefight, health services, lighting services, and others such as regulation of the marketplace and control of prices.²⁸ Although some of these have been among the prerogatives of the urban governing in the previous centuries, urban space and administration changed significantly during the nineteenth century when municipal councils undertook them as a centralized body. Likewise, many of these services now provided by the city municipality formerly had been in the control of pious endowments and local Muslim and non-Muslim communities.

3. Non-Muslim Dwellers in Edirne's Urban Governance

Edirne was no doubt a city of diversity, whose majority was formed by Muslim residents until the early twentieth century. The first population figures from the eighteenth century are from a surety register prepared in 1703. In the very same year, the so-called Edirne Incident (*Edirne Vak'ası*) would happen and the Sultan and his entourage in the imperial palace would return to Istanbul. In this register, we see that almost 20 percent of the Edirne's dwellers was non-Muslim.²⁹ It is estimated that the total number of people in Edirne in the eighteenth century was roughly about 40 thousand. A century later, the population in the city remained almost the same, but it seems that religious distribution changed dramatically. The first official census of 1830 and later the 1841 population data show that the proportion of Muslim population dropped to 44 per cent including the Muslim Roma,³⁰ due mostly to the Russian invasion of the city in 1829. In the following thirty years or so, the number of people in Edirne increased steadily reaching almost 70 thousand that shows a decisive recovery until the Russo-Turkish War of 1877-78.³¹

During the pre-Tanzimat period, administrative and financial officials completed their undertakings in cooperation with the local residents including the non-Muslims. In order to keep residential and communal boundaries within the determined barriers, judicial officials worked together with community leaders such as Muslim imams, Christian priests, Jewish lay leaders, and Armenian *marbasas*. For instance, 1703 surety registers were completed with the assistance of these community leaders who made sure that their communities behaved orderly and every one of them accepted to stand surety for each other.³² In other words, concerning the non-Muslims' affairs in the city, community leaders (both religious and secular) played a crucial role. When we came to the first attempts of the Sublime Port to implement its central policies, we see a similar approach that took into account this two-legged communal structure which became essential to representation of local groups. In fact, following the abolition of the Janissary Corps in 1826, the first system of official local representatives (*muhtars*) was established in İstanbul in 1829. Within this new system, two trustworthy and respected men (as the first and second elected official – *muhtar-ı evvel* and

27 Takvim-i Vekayi, Def'a 894, 5 Cemaziyelahir Sene 1284 (4 Ekim 1867). Cited in Evcı, *Tanzimat Döneminde Edirne*, 130.

28 Evcı, *Tanzimat Döneminde Edirne*, 135-157.

29 Karagedikli, "Bir Payitahtı".

30 Karakuş, *Osmanlı İdaresinde Edirne*, 162-163.

31 Evcı, *Tanzimat Döneminde Edirne*, 244-45.

32 Karagedikli, "Bir Payitahtı".

muhtar-ı sâni) were elected for each urban quarter.³³ Then, in 1833 the system was applied to other cities. In 1834, the central government decided to register Muslim and non-Muslim official legal representatives (*muhtars*) of neighborhoods or urban quarters (*mahalles*) in the city center and of villages in the sub-districts of Edirne.³⁴ Underlining their religious affiliations, two *muhtars* were assigned to each neighborhood, which very much resembled to the previous centuries' local leaders. Yet, this new system gave them official status within the newly formed state jargon, albeit Muslims and non-Muslims were given different titles (i.e., *muhtar* for Muslims and *muhbir* for non-Muslims). Greek (*Rum*) and Armenian urban representatives elected in urban quarters where they resided were assigned according to the aforementioned two-headed structure (i.e., *muhbir-i evvel* and *muhbir-i sâni*).³⁵ The Jewish community in Edirne, however, was treated in a different way. Since the mass migration of Iberian and European Jews to the Ottoman Empire in the early sixteenth century, similar to many urban centers, the Jews in Edirne were organized under various congregations. From the early seventeenth century on, there were 13 Jewish congregations, many of which were named according to their place of origin.³⁶ In terms of its communal structure, each Jewish congregation had a lay and a religious leader as was evident in nineteenth-century archival documents. It seems that the local and central authorities recognized these structure that was merely rhetorically amended according to the new central terminology.³⁷ In 1834 when the official election of neighborhood leaders was implemented, long-existed Jewish communal leadership under the control of lay and religious authorities retained their position. The German, Apulia, Italy, Budin, Toledo and Mallorca congregations had rabbis who were recognized as the first or second "informant".³⁸

Non-Muslim community leaders who were the representatives of those communities in the eyes of authorities, were indispensable agents in such matters as taxation and social order, which was surely comparable to the previous centuries' realities. However, unlike the previous centuries, their participation in municipal matters was not merely confined to their own communities. Rather, their high presence in the city council was quite apparent. The inclusion of non-Muslims in the municipal councils allowed the direct provision of urban services to a large segment of the local populace. This is evident in the number of members in the Edirne Municipal Council that was first published in the year-book (*Salname*) of the Edirne Province in 1870. According to it, the mayor of Edirne was Hayri Efendi and the council included 19 members, the majority of which was non-Muslims. Of the 19 permanent (*daimi*) and temporary (*muvakkat*) members, 13 men were non-Muslims.³⁹

33 Ali Akyıldız, "Muhtar", *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslam Ansiklopedisi*, (Istanbul: TDV Yayınları, 2016), 31/52.

34 BOA, Ruus Kalemi Defterleri (A.RSK.d), nr.1670 (H.1250).

35 BOA, A.RSK. d, nr.1670, pp.10-13

36 The 13 congregations were as follows: German, Sicily, Great Portugal, Little Portugal, Budin, Italy, Istanbul, Toledo, Apulia, Aragon, Gerush, Catalonia, Mallorca. See Gürer Karagedikli, "Overlapping Boundaries in the Ottoman City: Mahalle and Kahal in the Early Modern Ottoman Urban Context", *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 61/4 (2018), 650-692.

37 BOA, A.RSK. d, nr.1670, p.14.

38 The text reads: "Haham Avram bin İsak muhbir-i evvel-i cemaat-i m[ezbûr]". BOA, A.RSK. d, 1670 (H.1250), p.14.

39 When the Russian army invaded the city following the Russo-Turkish War of 1877-1878, a new municipal council was established. This new council was formed by 8 men (two Bulgarian, two Greek, two Turkish, one Armenian and, one Jewish). Cited in Evci, 131-132.

CONCLUSION

The present article has analyzed how urban governance changed in the imperial city of Edirne from the eighteenth to the late nineteenth century and the participation of non-Muslims in this new form of governance. While the city was under the control of the “imperial gardeners” until the late eighteenth century, it faced a massive transformation by the last decade of this century when the empire was undertaking its first centralized military reform attempts. During these years of turmoil, the city was governed both by the imperial gardeners and the appointed governors. However, it was only after the abolition of the Janissary Corps that transformed urban governance into a more centralized form. The centralization policies that brought military, administrative and financial matters under the responsibility of one governing body, and Edirne now as a provincial center maintained its pivotal position in the Tanzimat era when a more participatory system in this ethno-religiously diverse city was formed. Imperial character of Edirne remained intact, albeit it took new shapes under the centralization efforts of the Sublime Port in the nineteenth century when non-Muslims assumed new administrative roles. In relation with the new institutions established throughout the Tanzimat era, non-Muslims became a more participatory element in the city life. Although they were not completely invisible to the Muslim-majority city, their participation was more or less related to their share in tax partition or communal matters in which communal leaders played a crucial role. However, with the elected representatives who became permanent or temporary members of the city council, non-Muslim participation in urban life and in urban governance became a new way of manifesting this imperial city’s changing character.

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