Socio-political changes, confessionalization, and inter-confessional relations in Ottoman Damascus from 1760 to 1860

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SAMENVATTING EN SLEUTELWOORDEN

Sociopolitieke veranderingen, confessionalisering en interreligieuze relaties in Damascus tijdens het Ottomaanse tijdperk van 1760 tot 1860.

Dit proefschrift analyseert de relatie tussen sociaal-politieke veranderingen en interconfessionele relaties in Ottomaans Damascus van 1760 tot 1860. Door middel van een kruis lezen van hedendaagse kronieken, Ottomaanse archieven, Franse en Britse consulaire archieven, gerechtelijke archieven, evenals missionaire archieven, dit onderzoek onderzoekt hoe religieuze gemeenschappen werden voorgesteld en geconstrueerd in de context van de sociale, politieke en economische transformaties van de Tanzimat-periode aan het eind van de 18e eeuw en het begin van de 19e eeuw, en hoe dit interconfessionele relaties beïnvloedde.

Enerzijds was de traditionele interpretatie van de geschiedenis van Bilād al-Šām in de 19e eeuw gebaseerd op een essentialistische lezing van interconfessionele relaties en geweld gebaseerd op het verhaal van oude en aanhoudende haat tussen religieuze groeperingen. Aan de andere kant minimaliseert het lezen van de sociale geschiedenis de rol van religieuzen in deze dynamiek. Deze studie herintroduceert de religieuze factor, maar dan via een sociaalwetenschappelijke analyse. Het hanteert een diachrone benadering om de wisselwerking tussen langetermijnontwikkelingen binnen gemeenschappen en kortetermijn sociaal-politieke hervormingen van de 19e eeuw te bestuderen. Het brengt de relatie tussen de interne transformatie van gemeenschappen en interconfessionele relaties aan het licht. Ten eerste analyseert dit proefschrift de ontwikkeling van confessionele culturen onder Grieks-katholieken, joden en moslims. Vervolgens wijst het op de politisering van religieuze identificaties in de 19e eeuw door de transformaties van de relaties tussen de staat en de samenleving, buitenlandse interventie, machtsstrijd om toegang tot stedelijke en landelijke bronnen, en de wederopbouw van de hiërarchieën van de niet-moslimgemeenschappen via de institutionalisering van het gierstsysteem.

De aanval op de christelijke wijk Damascus in de zomer van 1860 is een belangrijke historische gebeurtenis in het collectieve geheugen van Syrië. Door een nieuw licht te werpen op deze gebeurtenis, draagt dit proefschrift bij tot een beter begrip van het interconfessioneel verleden van Bilād al-Šām.

Sleutelwoorden: confessionalisering, toegang tot middelen, sociaal-politieke veranderingen, Tanzimat-hervormingen, interconfessionele relaties, gemeenschapsopbouw, religie, identificaties.

A B S T R A C T   A N D   K E Y W O R D S

Abstract: *Socio-political Changes, Confessionalization, and Inter-confessional Relations in Ottoman Damascus from 1760 to 1860.*

This thesis analyzes the relation between socio-political changes and inter-confessional relations in Ottoman Damascus from 1760 to 1860. Through a cross-reading of contemporary chronicles, Ottoman archives, French and British consular archives, court records, as well as missionary archives, this research explores how religious communities were imagined and constructed in the context of the social, political, and economic transformations of the late 18th century and the early 19th century Tanzimat period, and how it affected inter-confessional relations.

On the one hand, the traditional interpretation of the history of *Bilād al-Šām* in the 19th century based upon an essentialist reading of inter-confessional relations and violence relied upon the narrative of ancient and enduring hatred between religious groups. On the other hand, the social history reading minimizes the role of religious in these dynamics. This study reintroduces the religious factor, but through a social science analysis. It adopts a diachronic approach to study the interaction between long term developments within communities and short term socio-political reforms of the 19th century. It brings to light the relation between the internal transformation of communities and inter-confessional relations. First, this thesis analyzes the development of confessional cultures among Greek Catholics, Jews and Muslims. Then, it points to the politicization of religious identifications in the 19th century through the transformations of state-society relations, foreign intervention, power struggles for access to urban and rural resources, and the reconstruction of the hierarchies of the non-Muslim communities through the institutionalization of the *millet* system. The attack against the Christian quarter of Damascus in the summer of 1860 features as an important historical event in Syrian collective memory. By shedding new light on this event, this thesis contributes to a better understanding of the inter-confessional past of *Bilād al-Šām*.

Keywords Confessionalization, Access to Resources, Socio-political Changes, *Tanzimat* Reforms, Inter-confessional relations, Community-building, Religion, Identifications.

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Ottoman words and names are transcribed in Modern Turkish. Arabic words and names are transliterated according to the following table:

ا	a, ā	ى	ā
ب	b	ي	ī
ت	t	و	ū
ث	t̠	۟	a
ج	ǧ	۟	i
ح	ḥ	۟	u
خ	ḫ	ـَيْ	ai
د	d	وَ	au
ذ	ḏ	ـِيّ	īy
ر	r	وّ	ūw
ز	z	ة	a, ah, āh, at, āt
س	s		
ش	š		
ص	ṣ		
ض	ḍ		

INTRODUCTION

Two main actors of Ottoman Damascene local politics described the same noteworthy event which played a determinant role in the attacks against the Christian neighborhood of the city of Damascus in the summer of 1860. These accounts provided two different narratives regarding the intentions of actors and the underlying dynamics of this event. The first one was written by the Damascene Greek Catholic chronicler Miḫāʾīl Mišāqā, who converted to Protestantism and became the American vice-consul of Damascus in 1859.[1] The second one was a letter of the French consul of Damascus Max Outrey to the French Minister of Foreign Affairs.

According to Miḫāʾīl Mišāqa:

[The Ottoman governor] Ahmad Pasha asked Christians to pay for the tax of exemption of military service and threatened to send them to jail (...). He arrested a lot of people, leaving their children hungry and their situation deteriorated to the point that Christians went to the Greek Orthodox Patriarch to seek his help. However, he was absent and his assistant was fearful when he saw the crowd coming towards him. He sought the help of the governor to protect him from the crowd and explained that they had risen in rebellion. The assistant meant that the Christians were so poor that they could not pay taxes.[2] He forgot that the Ottoman government dislikes the word rebellion. This event had a bad effect among the Muslim population, who were looking for such a chance to get rid of Christians because of their jealousy towards

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[1] On Miḫāʾīl Mišāqa see Erdoğan Keskinkiliç and Ebubekir Ceylan, "Her Majesty's Protected Subjects: The Mishaqa Family in Ottoman Damascus," Middle Eastern Studies 51, no. (2015): 175-194; Peter Hill, "The first Arabic translations of Enlightenment literature: The Damietta circle of the 1800s and 1810s," *Intellectual History Review* 25, no. 2 (2015): 209-233; Eugene Rogan, "Sectarianism and social conflict in Damascus : The 1860 events reconsidered," *Arabica: Revue d'études arabes* 51, no. 4 (2004): 493-511.
[2] Miḫāʾīl Mišāqa, *Kitāb mašhad al-ʿāyān bi ḥawādiṯ Suriyā wa Lubnān,* edited by Melḥem Ḫalīl ʿAbduh and Andrāwus Ḥannā Šaḫāšīrī (Cairo, 1908) 170; my translation.

them, especially after Christians begun to show off [their new socioeconomic status] . It was hard for them to see their former slaves become powerful (...).[3]

According to the French consul Max Outrey:

Ahmad Pasha called leaders of all nations to sign an engagement to pay the tax (...) and to make a census of their flocks. When working class Christians heard about this, they went in large groups to the patriarchates to prevent the signature of such a document, they declared that with or without this document they would not pay. The Greek Orthodox bishop, who being a reasonable man recognized that the government had the right to demand such tax, was attacked. (...) He had to escape by the roof of the patriarchal residence to avoid being attacked by the insolent crowd. (...) In order to change the mind of some confused individuals, I had to intervene (...). This event caused a bad impression among Muslims.[4]

Although presenting different analyses of the intentions of the Christian crowd, these accounts point to a variety of dynamics that will be highlighted in this thesis. This study seeks to address the transformation of inter-confessional relations in Ottoman Damascus from the mid-18th century to the 19th century. In the mid-19th century, inter-confessional tensions developed through the confessionalization of Ottoman society which politicized religious identities. Local events were perceived through the prism of religious identifications, shaping the development of sectarian discourses. The first author exemplified these dynamics. Miḫā'īl Mišāqā identified with Christians and supported their new-found legal and political equality with Muslims, which were part of a vast Ottoman project of reforms called the *Tanzimat*. At the same time, he adopted an exaggeratedly negative view of the place of Christians in Damascus before the 19th century reforms.[5] Finally, he pointed to the increasing mobilization of the commoners in this period. In the second account, the French consul emphasized his role as a mediator in this affair, pointing to the increasing foreign intervention in the relationship between the Ottoman government and its non-Muslim subjects. In addition to challenging Ottoman jurisdiction over its subjects, foreign intervention also contributed to

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[3] Ibid, 242.
[4] Center of Diplomatic Archives of Nantes (AE), 166/PO-Serie D/20 (Correspondance avec les échelles), vol. 5, Outrey-Lallemand, February 14th 1859; my translation.
[5] In other works, Mišāqa presented a more objective view of inter-confessional relations, pointing to his selective use of sectarian discourses based on the audience and context, see Eugene Rogan, "Sectarianism."

inter-confessional tensions. In addition, this event points to the crisis of authority within the religious and lay leadership of non-Muslim communities. Socioeconomic inequality caused tensions within the communities. Taxation practices associated with the rise of the modern Ottoman State featured as the trigger of Christians' rebellion and fostered popular mobilization. In a period of transformation of social hierarchies, this issue also highlights the relation between the internal divisions of Christian communities and inter-confessional relations between Christians and Muslims.

This research explores these various dynamics which shaped inter-confessional relations and created the conditions for inter-confessional tensions to morph into violence. After determining the time frame and focus of the thesis, we will present the historical context which forms the background of this study. Then, after addressing the current state of knowledge, we will expose the aims of this research, its significance and structure.

1. Time Frame and Focus

Ottoman Damascus was composed of a variety of religious communities, including Muslims, Jews, and Christians. Among the latter, which amounted to around 12% of the population, Greek Orthodox and Greek Catholics were the largest communities. There were also smaller Christian groups such as Syrian Orthodox, Syrian Catholics, Maronites, and Armenians. Latin Catholics were also present in the city, although they were usually foreigners. Amounting to around 4% of the population, the city's Jewish community was composed of various ethnic groups, but they were overwhelmingly Sephardi Jews. Although these different non-Muslim communities had various liturgical languages such as Syriac, Hebrew, Arabic, Ladino, Armenian, and Greek, they shared the common Arabic language in their daily lives and participated in shaping the culture of *Bilād al-Şam*. The remaining 84% of the Damascenes were Muslims, and were composed of different ethnic groups such as

Arabs, Kurds, Circassians, Turkmen and Druze.[6] Albeit this diversity of religious identifications and ethnicities, the major division in Damascene society was between elites and commoners.[7] Elite politics involved the notables of these various religious groups. Damascene urban society was built upon a variety of social groups and informal institutions such as status groups, residential units, socioeconomic statuses and professional organizations such as guilds. They provided cross-cutting forms of solidarity, common identifications and were a basis of collective political actions.[8]

In the pre-modern period, although some religious leaders were recognized to some level by the Ottoman government, non-Muslim communities dispersed over the empire had a variety of religious and lay leaderships which were not institutionalized at the imperial level. However, as other *ṭawāʾif,* or social groups, they benefited from some level of autonomy and legal particularities. They were represented by intermediaries who ensured the collection of taxation, internal justice and other facets of state-society relations. Borders between religious communities were loosely defined and a heterogeneity of doctrine was the norm.[9]

While religious identity was only one of the possible forms of belonging, the status of non-Muslims bore some specificities. They were legally distinguished through the status of *ḏimmī,* a tool to manage religious diversity while ensuring the Islamic nature of the state. This status had a variety of restrictions and obligations which were applied to different degrees depending on the political contexts in the provinces and imperial dynamics. In exchange of

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[6] A. E., 67/CPC, vol. 1/2, Beaudin-Guizot, June 4th 1842.

[7] Ussama Makdisi, *The Culture of Sectarianism. Community, History, and Violence in Nineteenth-Century Ottoman Lebanon*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), 6

[8] For an analysis of the system of urban governance in Ottoman cities see Nora Lafi, "The Ottoman Municipal Reforms between Old Regime and Modernity: Towards a New Interpretative Paradigm," in *1st International Eminönü Symposium* (Istanbul: Eminönü Belediyesi, 2006), 348.

[9] Bernard Heyberger, "Frontières confessionnelles et conversions chez les chrétiens orientaux (XVIIe – XVIIIe siècles)," in *Conversions islamiques. Identités religieuses en Islam méditerranéen / Islamic conversions. Religious Identities in Mediterranean Islam*, dir. Mercedes Garcia-Arenal, 245-258 (Paris: Maisonneuve & Larose / European Science Foundation, 2001); Bruce Alan Masters, *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Arab World : The Roots of Sectarianism*, Cambridge Studies in Islamic Civilization (Cambridge, U.K. ; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 61-62.

these constrains, non-Muslims were theoretically ensured the protection of the state and their legal persona.[10]

This research will analyze the transformation of inter-confessional relations over a century, from 1760 to 1860. The mid-18th century, and especially the rule of the governor As'ad Pasha (1743-1758) is often remembered as the most propitious time for Christians and Jews in Damascus.[11] On the other hand, the mid-19th century is remembered by the attack against the Christian quarter of the city in a context of increased inter-confessional tensions.

A diachronic approach will be used in order to consider the socio-political changes of religious groups over a century. It will analyse both the underlying developments affecting inter-confessional relations over a long period of time and short term events and dynamics shaping how groups interacted. This approach will allow me to consider community-building and inter-confessional relationships in a broader time frame than the mid-19th century *Tanzimat* reforms. It will help avoid a focus on the genealogy of the inter-confessional violence of 1860 in Damascus, moving away from a historiography which reads inter-confessional relations through the prism of the massacres. Instead, I consider a wide variety of inter-confessional interactions beyond violence.

This research's time-frame will end with the attacks against Christians that took place in Damascus and Mount Lebanon in the summer of 1860. The aftermath of the attacks led to important transformations of the social fabric. Through this diachronic approach, I will highlight two intertwined processes, the construction of confessional cultures from the 17th century onwards, and the politicization of religious identities in the 19th century.

The nature of the sources and the material encouraged me to adopt a micro-historical approach to the study of inter-confessional relations focusing on Damascus. Individuals often

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[10] Baber Johansen, *Contingency in a Sacred Law* (Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill, 1998), 219, 227; Anver Emon, *Religious Pluralism and Islamic Law: Dhimmis and Others in the Empire of Law* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012)*,* 96.
[11] Shimon Shamir, "As'ad Pasha Al-'Azm and Ottoman Rule in Damascus (1743-58)," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 26, no. 1 (1963): 16.

appear in multiple sources, highlighting the interaction of their various societal roles. A micro-historical approach emphasizes the agency and strategies of social actors and their agency in shaping both their community and the local political context.[12] A cross-reading and analysis of these various primary sources will allow us to explore simultaneously intra-confessional and inter-confessional levels of analysis.

In order to explore inter-confessional relations in Ottoman Damascus, this thesis will analyze the internal dynamics of three main groups, the Greek Catholic community, the Jewish community and the Sufi *ṭarīqā*[13] Naqšbandīyā. At first, I sought to present an exhaustive analysis of all the communities present in the city. However, after working in the French and British consular archives, I found an unexpected amount of valuable material regarding Greek Catholics in the city. Then I consulted the Archives of the Propaganda Fide and the Archivio Segreto Vaticano that provided explicit perspectives on communities and individuals alike. I was then also able to follow these individuals through the Ottoman archives, presented in yet another light. Because of the abundant sources and references, I thereby decided to focus on the Greek Catholics among Christians. This case study highlights social dynamics and help us understand the interaction between community-building and inter-confessional relations. These sources also shed a new light on the underlying and immediate causes of the attacks against the Christian neighborhood of Damascus. These events took place in the summer of 1860 and targeted mainly Greek Catholics. Although Greek Catholics constituted important political actors of Ottoman Damascus, their societal role has not been highlighted enough by previous studies.

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[12] The micro-historical approach to Ottoman history is represented by the pioneering work of Suraiya Faroqhi. See for example Suraiya Faroqhi, ed., *Stories of Ottoman Men and Women : Establishing Status, Establishing Control* (Istanbul : Eren, 2002); See also Jacques Revel, dir., *Jeux d'échelles. La micro-analyse à l'expérience* (Paris, Gallimard et Le Seuil, coll. Hautes Études, 1996); John -Paul Ghobrial, "Introduction: Seeing the World like a Microhistorian," *Past & Present* 242, no. suppl. 14 (2019): 1-22; Romain Bertrand and Guillaume Calafat, "Micro-analyse et histoire globale : affaire(s) à suivre," *Annales Histoire, Sciences sociales*, 73.1 (2019): 1-18; Sebouh David Aslanian, "Une vie sur plusieurs continents. Microhistoire globale d'un agent arménien de la Compagnie des Indes orientales 1666-1688," *Annales Histoire, Sciences sociales* 73, vol.1 (2019):19-55.
[13] Sufi confraternity.

A comparison with dynamics within the Greek Orthodox community would complete this analysis but due to the limitation of sources and the difficulty of accessing archives pertaining to the Greek Orthodox, it was not possible. Besides the information gathering regarding Greek Catholics, the consular and Ottoman archives highlighted the role of Jews in the city. Therefore, dynamics within the Greek Catholic community will be compared with similar developments in the Jewish community of the city. Greek Catholics and Jews were the main non-Muslim actors of the city's local politics. The internal changes of these two communities are often not studied simultaneously, yet a comparison of the structural, social and religious changes of these two communities is relevant. Non-Muslim communities' internal processes are often interconnected. The common political frame of the Ottoman Empire and the specificities of the region of *Bilād al-Šām* has shaped these communities' institutions and power struggles in similar ways. The dynamics highlighted by the two accounts presented above are indeed observable among Jews of Damascus as well. Finally, in the city in the 19th century, the *ṭarīqa* Naqšbandīya played an important societal role with the influence of its main charismatic leader in the city in the 19th century, Shaykh Ḫālid al-Naqšbandī. The *ṭarīqa* had a project of reform of society and religious practices which bore similarities with reforming outlooks within Jews and Christian communities. It shaped the nature of inter-confessional relations in the city and provides a relevant point of comparison with internal dynamics of non-Muslim communities.

In this research, the complexity of these religious identifications, their modification over time and their interaction with other forms of belonging will be underlined. As Frederick Cooper and Roger Brubaker argue, identifications, including religious ones, are dynamic statuses. Collective self-understandings fluctuate and are subjected to multiple discourses and categorizations shaped by social location.[14]

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[14] Rogers Brubaker and Frederick Cooper, "Beyond "Identity," *Theory and Society* 29, no. 1 (2000): 7, 14.

2. Historical Context

Starting with the 17th century, religious communities in the Ottoman empire were engaged in a parallel process of construction of confessional cultures. Communal borders were more precisely defined and reinforced by way of increasing social control, intensification of doctrine, homogenization of norms and practices, and construction of identifications through confrontation and opposition to other communities.[15] This long-term dynamic is the basis on which the confessionalization of Ottoman society took place in the 19th century. The 19th century was marked by the *Tanzimat* reforms, which transformed state-society relations and modified the legal status of non-Muslims in Ottoman society. These reforms were marked by a centralization of power and resources on the provincial and imperial level. It coincided with the increasing foreign involvement in the empire and a series of military defeats and internal secession. These various transformations shaped inter-confessional relations in the empire.

3. Historiographical Analysis

Previous scholars have approached inter-confessional relations in the Ottoman Empire from two main viewpoints, which are often influenced by the manner in which non-Muslims communities are studied. Regarding the study of non-Muslim communities, there is a scholarship divide based on discipline but also on different types of sources.

On the one hand, there is a tradition of religion based studies, or theology, which focused on religious history based on internal sources produced by religious scholars. These studies tended to study Christians and Jews as isolated communities not embedded in the

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[15] See Tijana Krstić, "State and Religion, "Sunnitization" and "Confessionalism" in Süleyman's Time," in *The Battle for Central Europe,* ed. Pal Fodor (Boston, USA: Brill, 2019), 66; Bernard Heyberger, *Les Chrétiens du Proche-Orient : Au temps de la réforme catholique (Syrie, Liban, Palestine, XVIIe-XVIIIe siècles).* Bibliothèque des Écoles Françaises d'Athènes et de Rome (Rome: École française de Rome, 2014); Ibid, *Hindiyya. Mystique et criminelle, 1720-1798* (Paris: Aubier, 2001); James Grehan, *Twilight of the Saints: Everyday Religion in Ottoman Syria and Palestine* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014).

Ottoman context. Furthermore they were based upon an essentialized and atemporal perception of their identity. The perception of inter-confessional relations in the Ottoman empire influenced by this approach was underlined by notions of primordial hatred and social segregation between religious communities. Violence of the 19th century was often seen as an outpouring of old hatred between religious groups that can only coexist in conflict. This violence was almost presented as inevitable and used to justify the Ottoman reforms. This interpretation corresponded to European imperialist discourses used to justify foreign intervention in the Ottoman Empire in the 19th century.[16] It also shaped the discourses of the Ottoman decision-makers in Istanbul.[17] In these accounts Christians and Jews seldom featured as agents but rather as passive victims of «Ottoman despotism» or «Muslim fanaticism».[18] In these accounts, violence is not analyzed as a sociological process but rather as a consequence of religious bigotry and intolerance. In these approaches, religious identities were used as an explanatory factor for all social processes.[19] This interpretation was in line with negative visions of the Ottoman past in the historiography of nation-states of the post-Ottoman world.[20]

On the other hand, the scholarship on the Middle East originating from the discipline of Area Studies focused on social history. In these accounts, Christians and Jews at times appeared as individuals engaged in socioeconomic economic activities, albeit with static and

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[16] Eleni Gara, "Conceptualizing Inter-Religious Relations in the Ottoman Empire: The Early Modern Centuries," *Acta Poloniae Historica*, no. 116 (2017): 64.

[17] Selim Deringil, "They Live in a State of Nomadism and Savagery": The Late Ottoman Empire and the Post-Colonial Debate," *Comparative Studies in Society and History: an International Quarterly* 45, no. 2 (2003): 311-342.

[18] See for example, Bat Ye'or, *The Dhimmi: Jews and Christians under Islam* (Rutherford, NJ: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1985); Ibid, *The Decline of Eastern Christianity under Islam: From Jihad to Dhimmitude* (Madison, NJ: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1996); Robert Haddad, *Syrian Christians in Muslim Society: An Interpretation* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1970); Bernard Lewis, "The Roots of Muslim Rage," *The Atlantic Monthly* 266 (September 1990).

[19] See for example Bernard Lewis, *The Jews of Islam* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1984) 168-172.

[20] Gara, "Conceptualizing, " 61, 64.

essentialized identities.[21] These works did present a different image of non-Muslim Ottoman subjects as involved in a variety of societal roles and social groups.[22] Since the 1980's, this scholarship looked at inter-confessional relations from the point of economic and political competition as well as governmentality.[23] Moving away from an image of Ottoman society composed of isolated communities living under the yoke of the Ottoman State, scholars have emphasized coexistence and inter-religious daily interactions.[24]

The use of Ottoman sources also changed the understanding of the political representation of non-Muslim communities. While previous works had tended to look at the *millet* system as a static institution originating from the beginning of Ottoman rule,[25] Benjamin Braude and Bernard Lewis challenged this perception in their seminal work *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Empire: The Functioning of a Plural Society.* They

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[21] See for example Linda Schatkowski Schilcher, *Families in politics: Damascene factions and estates of the 18th and 19th centuries* (Berliner Islamstudien, Bd. 2.) (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag Wiesbaden GMBH, 1985); Abdul-Karim Rafeq. *The Province of Damascus,1723-1783.* 2d ed. (Beirut: Khayats, 1970); André Raymond, *The Great Arab Cities In the 16th-18th Centuries : an Introduction* (New York: New York University Press, 1984); Abraham Marcus, *The Middle East On the Eve of Modernity : Aleppo In the Eighteenth Century* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1989); Abdul-Karim Rafeq, Peter Sluglett, and Stefan Weber, eds., *Syria and Bilad Al-sham Under Ottoman Rule : Essays In Honour of Abdul Karim Rafeq (*Leiden: Brill, 2010).

[22] André Raymond, *Grandes villes arabes à l'époque ottomane* (Paris: Sindbad, 1985); Ibid, "Ville musulmane, ville arabe : mythes orientalistes et recherches récentes," in *La ville arabe, Alep, à l'époque ottomane (XVIe-XVIIIe siècles),* ed. André Raymond, 309-336 (Damascus: Institut français de Damas, 1998); Ibid, "Groupes sociaux et géographie urbaine à Alep au 18ème siecle," in *The Syrian Land in the 18th and 19th Century : The Common and the Specific in the Historical Experience*, ed. Thomas Philipp, 147- 63 (Stuttgart: F. Steiner, 1992)

[23] Moshe Ma'oz, *Ottoman Reform in Syria and Palestine, 1840-1861 : The Impact of the Tanzimat on Politics and Society* (Oxford, London: Clarendon P., 1968); Albert Hourani, "Ottoman Reform and the Politics of Notables," in *The Beginnings of Modernisation in the Middle East*, ed. W. Polk and R. Chambers, 41-68 (Chicago: UCP, 1968); Philip S. Khoury, *Urban Notables and Arab Nationalism : The Politics of Damascus, 1860-1920* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983).

[24] Gara, "Conceptualizing," 74; Ronald C. Jennings, *Christians and Muslims in Ottoman Cyprus and the Mediterranean World, 1571-1640,* New York University Studies in near Eastern Civilization (New York: New York University Press, 1993); Molly Greene, *A shared world: Christians and Muslims in the early modern Mediterranean* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000); Haim Gerber, "Muslims and *zimmi*s in Ottoman economy and society: Encounters, culture, and knowledge," in *Studies in Ottoman social and economic life*, ed. Raul Motika, Christoph Herzog, and Michael Ursinus, 99–124 (Heidelberg: Heidelberg Orientverl, 1999); Marie Carmen Smyrnelis, *Une société hors de soi : identités et relations sociales à Smyrne aux XVIIIe et XIXe siècles* (Paris-Louvain : Peeters, coll. Turcica X, 2006); Meropi Anastassiadou, "Making Urban Identity, Dividing up Urban Time. Festivities among the Greeks of Istanbul in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries," in *Celebration, Entertainment and Theatre in the Ottoman World,* eds. Suraiya Faroqhi and Arzu Öztürkmen, 237-260 (London: Seagull Books, 2014).

[25] H.A.R. Gibb and Harold Bowen, *Islamic society and the West: A study of the impact of Western civilization on Moslem culture in the Near East*, 2 vols. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1957).

pointed to the institutionalization of the *millet* system as a 19th century dynamic.[26] Consequently, studies have shed light on the relationship between the various religious leaderships and the Ottoman government, creating a more complex picture of non-Muslims in power relations.[27]

While this scholarship has challenged the image of isolated communities, it was underlined by the historiographical caveat of the secularization narrative, which denies the role of religion in social processes. It follows a pattern of secular history replacing religious history. Secular history is based on the assumption that religion is not a relevant factor in the explanation of social dynamics.[28] This approach emerged in response to the overarching visions of inter-confessional relations and religious identifications that saw the Middle East as composed of isolated religious groups living in conflict and perpetual hatred. Secular histories tended to rather emphasize the porosity of borders and the lack of importance of religious distinctions. Social phenomena were explained by pragmatism, seen as distinct or even opposed to religious considerations.[29] However, in discarding religion as an explanatory factor, these studies failed to capture the changes in the signification and experience of the religious group and religious identities in the societies studied.

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[26] Benjamin Braude and Bernard Lewis, *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Empire : The Functioning of a Plural Society* (New York: Holmes & Meier Publishers, 1982)*;* Aylin Koçunyan, "The Millet System and the Challenge of Other Confessional Models, 1856–1865," *Ab Imperio (*2017) 59-85.
[27] Dimitris Kamouzis, "Elites and formation of national identity: The case of the Greek Orthodox *millet* (mid-nineteenth century to 1922)," in *State-nationalisms in the Ottoman Empire, Greece and Turkey: Orthodox and Muslims, 1830–1945,* ed. Benjamin C. Fortna, Stefanos Katsikas, Dimitris Kamouzis, and Paraskevas Konortas, 13-46 (London: Routledge, 2012); Fiona McCallum, "Religious Institutions and Authoritarian States: church–state relations in the Middle East," *Third World Quarterly* 33, no. 1 (2012): 109-124; Hasan Çolak, *The Orthodox Church in the Early Modern Middle East: Relations between the Ottoman Central Administration and the Patriarchates of Antioch, Jerusalem and Alexandria* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu/Turkish Historical Society, 2015); Tellan E. Bayraktar, *The Patriarch and the Sultan: The Struggle for Authority and the Quest for Order in the Eighteenth-Century Ottoman Empire* (Istanbul: Bilkent University, 2011); Tom Papademetriou, *Render unto the Sultan, Power, Authority, and the Greek Orthodox Church in the Early Ottoman Centuries* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015); Maurits H. van den Boogert, "Millets: Past and Present," in *Religious Minorities in the Middle East. Domination, Self-Empowerment, Accommodation,* ed. A.N. Longva and A.S. Roald, 27- 43 (Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2012); Dimitri Stamatopoulos, "From Millets to Minorities in the 19th – Century Ottoman Empire: an Ambiguous Modernization," in *Citizenship in Historical Perspective,* ed. S. G. Ellis, G. Hálfadanarson and A.K. Isaacs, 253-273 (Pisa: Edizioni Plus-Pisa University Press, 2006).
[28] Neeladri Bhattacharya, "Predicaments of Secular History," *Public Culture* 20, no. 1 (2008): 62, 68.
[29] An approach often found in Subaltern studies, see Gyanendra Pandey, *Routine Violence : Nations, Fragments, Histories, Cultural Memory in the Present* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2006).

The development of post-colonial and subaltern studies in the 1980's contributed to this approach by focusing on the role of foreign imperialism and modernizing governmentality in events of inter-confessional violence. Researchers have attempted to counter earlier reading of violence as displays of "traditional hatred" by analyzing inter-confessional violence through the prism of relations between state and society. The advent of the modern state and its tools of governance has been seen as the cause of inter-confessional violence.[30] However, these studies relied on a dichotomous understanding of power dynamics, which gave little space for individual agency. Subaltern studies did put the state at the center of inter-confessional relations, yet, the nature of the state itself deserves further attention and the perception of the state as a unit needs to be challenged.[31] State actors, provincial governors, intermediaries, decision-makers in the center and ulema, all part of the state apparatus, played different roles, had their own objectives and strategies. Together they formed what is perceived as state policy. This observation challenges the notion of the modernizing state imposing top-down reform and points to the importance of negotiation, ambiguity and contradictory processes in the formulation and application of the reforms. It also leaves more space for individual agency.

Trends of religious and secular history provide only fragmented and disconnected histories of Ottoman non-Muslims in various contexts, emphasizing either religious or social history. The interaction between religious, economic and political dynamics is often not considered.[32] Yet, lay and clerical elements of Jewish and Christian communities were deeply interrelated by family ties, networks, and patron-client relationships. Individuals played a multiplicity of societal roles.[33] Furthermore, the political and economic strategies of

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[30] Ibid, 2-5; In the Ottoman case see for example Karen Barkey, "Islam and toleration: Studying the Ottoman imperial Model," *International Journal of Politics, Culture, and Society 19*, 1–2 (2005): 5–19.

[31] On the topic of the nature of the state see Marc Aymes, *A Provincial History of the Ottoman Empire: Cyprus and the Eastern Mediterranean in the Nineteenth Century* (Oxon: Routledge, 2013).

[32] Masters, *Christians and Jews,* 1–5.

[33] See for example in this thesis the central role of Ḥanna Frayǧ both in the administration and in the institutions of the Greek Catholic community.

Christians and Jews played an important role in the transformation of their own communities and institutions. To gain a comprehensive vision of non-Muslim communities in the Ottoman empire, the conceptual frontier drawn between the study of lay and religious dynamics needs to be crossed. As much as non-Muslims cannot be reduced to members of a religious community, they can neither be considered as isolated entities estranged from communal and religious dynamics.

New perspectives on the dynamic nature of religious identification have provided a more nuanced approach to inter-confessional relations by challenging both the image of age-old hatred and the later overemphasis on peaceful coexistence, pluralism and cosmopolitanism. They have done so by analyzing the variations in inter-confessional interactions and by identifying specific moments and contexts which caused conflict and violence.[34] Scholars have focused on different types of interactions and sociabilities.[35] The use of common spaces, institutions[36] as well as shared religious rituals have received

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[34] This new approach to inter-confessional relations is a present in European studies as well. Among other see Scott C. Dixon, Dagmar Friest and Mark Greengrass, eds., *Living with Religious Diversity in Early Modern Europe* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2009); Isabel Karremann, Cornel Zwierlein and Inga Mai Groote, eds., *Forgetting Faith?Negotiating Confessional Conflict in Early Modern Europe* (Berlin, Boston: De Gruyter, 2012); Benjamin J. Kaplan, *Divided by Faith: Religious Conflict and the Practice of Toleration in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007);

[35] Nicholas Doumanis, *Before the nation: Muslim-Christian coexistence and its destruction in late Ottoman Anatolia* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013); Ari Ariel, *Jewish-Muslim Relations and Migration from Yemen to Palestine in the Late Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries* (Boston, USA: Brill, 2013); Karen Barkey, "Islam and Toleration: Studying the Ottoman Imperial Model," *International Journal of Politics, Culture, and Society* 19, no. 1/2 (2005): 5-19; Heather J. Sharkey, *A History of Muslims, Christians and Jews in the Middle East* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017); James Reilly, "Inter-Confessional Relations in 19th-Century Syria: Damascus, Homs and Hama Compared," *Islam and Muslim-Christian Relations* 7 (1996): 213-224; Lucette Valensi, "Inter-Communal Relations and Changes in Religious Affiliation in the Middle East (Seventeenth to Nineteenth Centuries)," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 39, no. 2 (1997): 251-69.

[36] Vanessa Gueno, "Musulmans et chrétiens, citadins et ruraux face au mahkamat bidâyat Hims à la fin du XIXe siècle," *in Actes du colloque : Les relations entre musulmans et chrétiens dans le Bilâd al-Cham à l'époque ottomane aux XVIIe-XIXe siècles. Apport des archives des tribunaux religieux des villes : Alep, Beyrouth Damas, Tripoli*, 215-231 (Beirut: Université de Balamand, Ifpo & Université de Saint-Joseph, 2005); Najwa al-Qattan, "Dhimmīs in the Muslim Court: Legal Autonomy and Religious Discrimination, " *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 31, no. 3 (1999): 429–44; Heleen L. Murre-van den Berg and Sasha R. Goldstein-Sabbah, eds., *Modernity, Minority, and the Public Sphere: Jews and Christians in the Middle East,* Leiden Studies in Islam and Society 4 (Leiden: Brill, 2016).

scholarly attention.[37] Subsequently, in line with the spatial turn in history in the 1990's, scholars have looked at the use of space and its role in inter-confessional relations.[38] Other scholars focused on literary, cultural, political,[39] and intellectual encounters between members of different religious groups.[40] Language was also approached as a space of inter-confessional encounter.[41] Secular narratives were further challenged by the research done on inter-confessional violence in the medieval period.[42] Scholars also took a new look at political and economic competition among religious communities which takes into account

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[37] James Grehan, *Twilight of the Saints;* Dionigi Albera and Marie Couroucli, dir., *Religions traversées. Lieux saints partagés entre chrétiens, musulmans et juifs en Méditerranée* (Arles, Actes Sud, 2009); Glenn Bowman, *Sharing the Sacra: The Politics and Pragmatics of Intercommunal Relations around Holy Places* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2012); Raymond Cohen, *Saving the Holy Sepulchre: How Rival Christians Came Together to Rescue their Holiest Shrine* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008); Poujeau Anna, *Des monastères en partage. Sainteté et pouvoir chez les chrétiens de Syrie*, Nanterre, Société d'ethnologie, 2014; Elazar Barkan and Karen Barkey, eds., *Choreographies of Shared Sacred Sites: Religion, Politics, and Conflict Resolution* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2015).

[38] Ulrike Freitag, Nelida Fuccaro, Claudia Ghrawi and Nora Lafi, eds., *Urban Violence in the Middle East: Changing Cityscapes in the Transition from Empire to Nation State* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2015); Najwa Al-Qattan "Across the Courtyard: Residential Space and Sectarian Boundaries in Ottoman Damascus," In *Minorities in the Ottoman Empire: A Reconsideration*, ed. Molly Greene, 13-45 (Princetown NJ: Marcus Wiener, 2005); Sibel Zandi-Sayek,"Orchestrating Difference, Performing Identity: Public Rituals in Nineteenth-Century Izmir," in *Hybrid Urbanism: On the Identity Discourse and the Built Environment*, ed. Nezar AlSayyad, 42-66 (Westport: Praeger, 2001).

[39] Bedross Der Matossian, *Shattered Dreams of Revolution: From Liberty to Violence in the Late Ottoman Empire (*Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2014); James Grehan, "Imperial Crisis and Muslim-Christian Relations in Ottoman Syria and Palestine, c. 1770-1830," *Journal of the economic and social history of the Orient* 58, no. 4 (January 1, 2015): 490–531.

[40] Peter Hill, *Utopia and Civilisation in the Arab Nahda* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020); Ibid, "The first Arabic translations of Enlightenment literature: The Damietta circle of the 1800s and 1810s," *Intellectual History Review* 25, no. 2 (2015): 209-233; Butrus al-Bustani, *The Clarion of Syria: A Patriot's Call against the Civil War of 1860*, trans. Jens Hanssen, Hicham Safieddine (Oakland: University of California Press, 2019).

[41] Heleen Murre-van den Berg, Karène Sanchez Summerer and Tijmen Baarda, eds., *Arabic and its Alternatives: Religious Minorities and their Languages in the Emerging Nation States of the Middle East (1920-1950)* (Christians and Jews in Muslim Societies, 5) (Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2020); Heleen L. Murre-van den Berg, "The Language of the Nation: The Rise of Arabic among Jews and Christians (1900–1950)," *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* 43, vol. 2 (2016): 176-190.

[42] Inter-confessional violence has been reappraised through all the historical period, and especially of the Middle Ages, often perceived as a period defined by intolerance and violence. Moving away from seeing inter-confessional violence as a moral failing and an outcome of religious fanaticism, scholars such as David Nirenberg and R.I. Moore have highlighted how violence was linked to processes of creation of identification categories, was used as a power tool and was related to state formation. Nirenberg challenged the perception of violence as the work of fanatic popular masses but instead pointed to the strategy of specific groups; David Nirenberg, *Communities of Violence : Persecution of Minorities in the Middle Ages* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1996); Robert I. Moore, *The Formation of a Persecuting Society: Authority and Deviance in Western Europe 950-1250*, 2nd ed. (Malden, MA ; Oxford ; Carlton : Blackwell, 2007).

the dynamic construction of religious identity.[43] The agency of non-Muslims was highlighted in these works pushing into the background the role of foreign consuls and ambassadors which had previously been presented as the main actors of the *Tanzimat* period. Christians and Jews were previously often presented as the direct but passive beneficiaries of the reforms, and not as full actors of this transformation.[44]

Scholars such as Ussama Makdisi, Eugene Rogan, Bruce Masters have examined the process of of confessionalization, or sectarianism, which refers to a variety of dynamics of politicization of religious identities in the 19th century,[45] feeding populist religious mobilization and the related rise of a different type of mass popular violence.[46] The violence of 1860 in Damascus and Mount Lebanon had first been analyzed as a reaction to the *Tanzimat* reforms.[47] Then, scholars such as James Reilly, Bruce Masters, and Leila Fawaz analyzed it as a consequence of the integration of the region into the world political economy.[48] Ussama Makdisi and Eugene Rogan pointed to the development of sectarian discourses.[49] James Grehan and Peter Hill highlighted sectarianism as a response to the global political turmoil of the late 18th and the early 19th century, known as the age of

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[43] Bruce Masters has focused on economic competition in his exploration of the violence in Damascus. He analyzed the transformation of the economy of Bilād al Šām through its integration into the world market economy and its consequences on inter-confessional relations, Masters, *Christians and Jews.*

[44] The agency of non-Muslims is highlighted in a variety of works including Méropi Anastassiadou and Bernard Heyberger eds, *Figures anonymes, figures d'elite: Pour une anatomie de l'Homo Ottomanicus* (Istanbul: Isis, 1999); Bernard Heyberger and Aurélien Girard, "Chrétiens au Proche-Orient. Les nouvelles conditions d'une présence," *Archives de sciences sociales des religions* 171 (2015); Paul Rowe, "The Middle Eastern Christian," 472-474.

[45] Ussama Makdisi, *Age of Coexistence: The Ecumenical Frame and the Making of the Modern Arab World* (Oakland, California: University of California Press, 2019); Suad Joseph, "Pensée 2: Sectarianism as Imagined Sociological Concept and as Imagined Social Formation," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 40, no. 4 (2008): 553–54. Azmi Bishara, "Ta'ifah, Sect and Sectarianism: From the Word and Its Changing Implications to the Analytical Sociological Term," *AlMuntaqa* 1, no. 2 (2018): 53-67; Ibid, *Sectarianism and Imagined Sects* (London: C Hurst & Co Publishers Ltd, 2020); James Grehan, "Imperial crisis and Muslim-Christian relations in Ottoman Syria and Palestine c. 1770-1830," *The Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 58 (2015): 490-531; Rogan, "Sectarianism"; Masters, *Christians and Jews.*

[46] Ussama Makdisi, "Corrupting the Sublime Sultanate: The Revolt of Tanyus Shahin in Nineteenth-Century Ottoman Lebanon," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 42, no. 1 (2000): 183, 193.

[47] Ma'oz, *Ottoman reforms*.

[48] Reilly, "Inter-Confessional Relations"; Leila Tarazi Fawaz, *An Occasion for War : Civil Conflict in Lebanon and Damascus* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994); Masters, *Christians and Jews.*

[49] Makdisi, *Culture of Sectarianism;* Rogan, "Sectarianism"

revolutions. Similar political economic context in Europe, the Atlantic and the Middle East led to a crisis of the military fiscal state which politicized commoners.[50]

In the last decades, a "religious turn", related to the "cultural turn",[51] has taken place as scholars such as Bernard Heyberger among others bridged the gap between the two scholarly traditions of religious history and area studies.[52] It represents a new historical approach to religious dynamics which uses the insights of the scholarship on social history but brings back the question of religion by looking at the transformation of the internal dynamics of non-Muslim communities.[53] It challenges the secularization narrative about the lack of relevance of religion in social dynamics. It also presents a dynamic image of non-Muslims' religious identity, focusing on continuity and change, mobility and transfers.[54] This

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[50] Peter Hill, "How Global Was the Age of Revolutions? The Case of Mount Lebanon, 1821," *Journal of Global History (*2020): 1–20; Grehan, "Imperial crisis".

[51] For the cultural turn in history see Lynn Hunt,"Introduction," in *The New Cultural History,* ed. Lynn Hunt, 1-24 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989); Examples of the cultural turn in Ottoman historiography are James Grehan, "The Mysterious Power of Words: Language, Law, and Culture in Ottoman Damascus (17th-18th Centuries)," *Journal of Social History* 37, no. 4 (2004): 991–1015; Ibid, *Everyday Life and Consumer Culture in 18th-Century Damascus,* Publications on the Near East (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2007); Keith David Watenpaugh, *Being Modern in the Middle East : Revolution, Nationalism, Colonialism, and the Arab Middle Class (*Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2006); Donald Quataert, ed., *Consumption Studies and the Ottoman Empire, 1550-1922: An Introduction* (Albany NY: State University of New York Press, 2000).

[52] Bernard Heyberger, "Pour une « histoire croisée » de l'occidentalisation et de la confessionnalisation chez les chrétiens du Proche-Orient," *The MIT-Electronic Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* 3, (Autumn 2003): 36 – 49; Talal Asad, *Genealogies of Religion: Discipline and Reasons of Power in Christianity and Islam* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993); Eugene Rogan, ed., *Outside In: On the Margins of the Modern Middle East* (New York: IB Tauris, 2002).

[53] For studies on Christians, it follows the pioneering work of Bernard Heyberger's on the rise of the Oriental Catholic churches; *Les chrétiens du Proche-Orient;* As examples of this trend see Febe Armanios, *Coptic Christianity in Ottoman Egypt* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011); Chantal Verdeil, Michalis N. Michael and Tassos Anastassiadis, eds., *Religious Communities and Modern Statehood, The Ottoman and Post-Ottoman World at the Age of Nationalism and Colonialism,* Islamkundliche Untersuchungen, band 21 (Berlin: Klaus Schwarz Verlag 2015); Nelly Van Doorn-Harder, "Finding a Platform: Studying the Copts in the 19th and 20th Centuries," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 42, no. 3 (2010): 479-82; Geraldine Chatelard, *Briser la mosaïque: Lien social et identités collectives chez les chrétiens de Madaba, Jordanie, 1870–1997* (Paris: Editions du CNRS, 2004); Kais Firro, *Metamorphosis of the Nation (al-Umma): The Rise of Arabism and Minorities in Syria and Lebanon, 1850– 1940* (Brighton: Sussex Academic Press, 2009); Paul Rowe, "The Middle Eastern Christian as Agent," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 42, no. 3 (2010): 472-474; Razmik Panossian, *The Armenians: From Kings and Priests to Merchants and Commissars* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006); Adam Becker, *Revival and Awakening:American Evangelical Missionaries in Iran and the Origins of Assyrian Nationalism* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2015); Paul Sedra, *From Mission to Modernity: Evangelicals, Reformers and Education in Nineteenth Century Egypt* (London: I.B.Tauris, 2011).

[54] The "global turn" in the field of history has encouraged the study of dynamics of migration and mobility among the dispersed and transnational non-Muslim Middle Eastern communities. See John-Paul Ghobrial,

scholarship emphasized the internal dynamics of religious communities, the transformation of dogma, practices and beliefs. Bernard Heyberger, Aurélien Girard, Cesare Santus, Tijana Kristic, Derin Terzioglu[55], Guy Burak,[56] Nathalie Clayer,[57] Nir Shafir,[58] among others emphasized the process of the construction of confessional cultures in the Ottoman empire starting in the 17th century. They point to the intensification of religious doctrine and gradual construction of communal borders in the early modern Ottoman Empire.[59] The impact of missionaries' intervention on the internal dynamics of non-Muslim communities, especially Christians, has been the focus of recent works.[60]

    This new approach to non-Muslims in the Ottoman Empire emphasizing the internal dynamics of non-Muslim communities and the role of religious practices, beliefs, and identifications in community-building have not been used enough to inform the study of

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"Moving Stories and What They Tell Us: Early Modern Mobility Between Microhistory and Global History," *Past & Present* 242, no. 14 (2019): 243-280.

[55] Derin Terzioglu, "Sufis in the Age of State-Building and Confessionalization, " in *The Ottoman World*, ed. Christine Woodhead, 86-99 (London: Routledge, 2012).

[56] Guy Burak, "Faith, law and empire in the Ottoman 'age of confessionalization' (fifteenth–seventeenth centuries): the case of 'renewal of faith'," *Mediterranean Historical Review* 28, no. 1 (2013): 1-23.

[57] Nathalie Clayer, "The dimension of confessionalisation in the Ottoman Balkans at the time of Nationalisms," in *The Great Powers, the Ottoman Empire, and Nation-Building, Conflicting loyalties in the Balkans,* ed. H. Grandits, N. Clayer and R. Pichler, 89-109 (London: I.B. Tauris, 2011).

[58] Nir Shafir, "Moral Revolutions: The Politics of Piety in the Ottoman Empire Reimagined," *Comparative studies in society and history* 61, no. 3 (July 2019): 595–623.

[59] See the workshop *Building Confessional Identities in the Ottoman Empire (16th-18th centuries),* organized by Cesare Santus (EFR), Ecole française de Rome, February 6th 2017; For an earlier example of the study of confessionalization see Heyberger,"Les chrétiens du Proche-Orient," 384-551; See also Tijana Krstić, *Narratives of Religious Change in the Early Modern* Ottoman Empire (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2011)*;* Derin Terzioglu "Sufis in the age of state-building."; Ussama Makdisi, *The Culture of Sectarianism* ; Aurélien Girard, "Le christianisme oriental (XVIIe-XVIIIe siècles). Essor de l'orientalisme catholique en Europe et construction des identités confessionnelles au Proche-Orient," PhD diss., (Paris, École Pratique des Hautes Études, 2011); Cesare Santus, *Trasgressioni necessarie : communicatio in sacris, coesistenza e conflitti tra le comunità cristiane orientali (Levante e Impero ottomano, XVII-XVIII secolo)* (Rome: École Française de Rome, 2019); Marc David Baer, *Honored by the Glory of Islam : Conversion and Conquest in Ottoman Europe* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008); Nabil Al-Tikriti, "Ibn-i Kemal's confessionalism and the construction of an Ottoman Islam," in *Living in the Ottoman realm: Empire and identity, 13th to 20th centuries,* ed. Christine Isom-Verhaaren and Kent F. Schull, 95-107 (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2016).

[60] Adam H. Becker, *Revival and Awakening*; Heather J. Sharkey, *A History of Muslims, Christians, and Jews*; Some scholars presented a secularized history of missions: Chantal Verdeil, *La mission jésuite du Mont-Liban et de Syrie (1830-1864)* (Paris: Les Indes Savantes, 2011); Olivier Bocquet, *Missionnaires Français en terre d'Islam : Damas 1860-1914* (Paris: Les Indes savantes, 2005); Karène Sanchez, *Politiques, éducation et identités linguistiques. Le collège des Frères des écoles chrétiennes de Jérusalem (1922-1939)* (Utrecht: LOT, 2009); Heleen Murre-van den Berg, *New faith in ancient lands : Western missions in the Middle East in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries* (Leiden: Boston: Brill, 2006).

inter-confessional relations. The relation between how communities are constructed and how they interact with others deserves more attention.

4. Aims of the Research

Following earlier scholars who bridged the gap between religious and social history of *Bilād al-Šām*, this thesis will reintroduce the issue of religion into the economic and social history of the city. This research aims to contribute to the recent historiography of non-Muslims in the Ottoman empire and of inter-confessional relations by highlighting the interaction between internal dynamics of communities and inter-confessional relations. Through a micro-historical analysis of inter-confessional relations in Damascus, this analysis will permit one to go beyond the top-down perception of state reforms and foreign intervention and to look at the period of the *Tanzimat* from the bottom up.

This thesis will ask in what ways were religious communities imagined and constructed in the context of the social, political, and economic transformations of the 1760-1860 period and how did it affect inter-confessional relations? Critical historical questions which drive this research include: What role did the *Tanzimat* reforms and associated developments such as foreign intervention and missionary activity have on these processes? How did individual strategies to gain access to resources shape the process of confessionalization?

To address these questions, this thesis will bring into interaction the different levels of analysis which are generally addressed separately, notably because of the nature of the sources. First, there is the inter-confessional level analyzing relations between Christians, Jews and Muslims. Then, the inter-sect level refers to the relation between sub-groups of the same religious denomination, such as Greek Catholics and Greek Orthodox. Finally, the intra-confessional level looks at internal dynamics of each sub-group emphasizing the

importance of class, kinship, local and regional identifications in shaping the larger community and its societal role.

To bring into interaction these different levels of analysis, I used various types of references and sources. First, I used chronicles and memoirs of the urban elite, some of which have recently been discovered.[61] However, I interpreted them through the lens of the extensive secondary literature derived from the court documents and the study of material culture.[62] Ten chronicles were written by Christians, from which five of them have anonymous authors.[63] The other five are the chronicles of Miḫāʾīl al-Dimašqī[64] and Miḫāʾīl Mišāqa,[65] Rufaʾīl Karamā,[66] Ibrāhīm ʿAwra[67] and Makāriyūs Šāhīn.[68] These chronicles were found mostly at the library of the Saint Joseph University and at the American University of Beirut. The main Muslim chroniclers used in this research are Muḥammad Saʿīd al-ʿUsṭwanī,[69] Nuʿmān al-Qasāṭlī[70] and Muḥammad Abu'l-Suʾūd al-Ḥasībī.[71]

My research also made extensive use of consular correspondences. I consulted French consular reports of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Paris[72] and in Nantes[73] as well as the

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[61] See the list below. I would like to thank my colleague Feras Krimsti for sharing many of these chronicles with me.

[62] For example, Stefan Weber, *Damascus : Ottoman Modernity and Urban Transformation (1808-1918)*, Proceedings of the Danish Institute in Damascus, (Århus Denmark: Aarhus University Press, 2009) vol. 1, 20-22

[63] *Aḥwāl al-naṣārā b'ad al- ḥarb al-qaram* (Beirut: Catalogue Cheikho, Université Saint Joseph) *;Muḏakkirāt tārīḫīya ʿan ḥamlat ʾIbrāhīm Bāšā ʿalā Sūriya*, ed. Aḥmad Ġassān Sabānū (Damascus: Dar Qutayba, 1980) ; *Kitāb al-āḥzān fī tārīḫ wāqiʿāt al-Šām wa mā yalīhuma bimā āṣāba al-Masīḥiyin min al-Durūz wa al-Islām fī 9 Tammūz 1860* (Beirut: Jafet Library, American University of Beirut) ; *Ḥaṣr al-Liṯām ʿan al-Islām* (Beirut: Jafet Library. American University of Beirut); Louis Bulaybil, ed. *Tabrīr al-Naṣārā mimmā nusiba īlayhim fī hawādiṯ sana 1860,* Al-Mashriq 26 (1928): 631-644.

[64] Miḫāʾīl al-Dimašqī, *Tārīḫ ḥawādiṯ ğarat bil-Šām wa al-Ğabal 1782–1841*, ed. Muḥammad ʿAbd al-Karīm Muḫāfaẓa (Amman: Dār Ward al-Urdanīya lil-našr wa al-Tawzīʿ, 2004).

[65] Mišāqa, *Mašhad.*

[66] Rufaʾīl Karama, *Ḥawadiṯ Lubnān wa Sūrīya min sana 1745 ilā sana 1800*, edited by Basīlūs Qaṭān (Beirut: Jarus Bars)

[67] Ibrāhīm al-ʿAwra, *Tārīḫ wilāya Sulaymān Bāšā al-ʿādil yaštamilu ʿalā tārīḫ Filasṭīn wa Lubnān,* ed. Q. al-Bāšā (Ṣaydā: Maṭb. Dār al-Muḫliṣ, 1936).

[68] Makāriyūs Šāhīn, *Ḥaṣr al-Liṯām ʿan Nakbat al-Šām* (Cairo: Kutub Turath, 1895).

[69] Muḥammad Saʿīd al-Usṭwānī, *Mašāhid wa ʾaḥdāṯ Dimašqīya fī muntaṣaf al-qarn al-tāsiʿ ʿašar, 1256- 1277 H, 1840-1861,* ed. Asʾad Al-ʾUsṭwānī (Damas: 1994).

[70] Nuʿmān al-Qasāṭlī, *al-Rawḍa al-ġannāʾ fī Dimašq al-fayḥāʾ*, 2ᵉ ed, (Beirut: Dar al-Rāʾid al-ʿArabiya, 1982).

[71] This chronicle is explored through the secondary work of Kamal S. Salibi, "The 1860 Upheaval".

[72] Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (AE), La Courneuve, CCC/98 (Correspondance commerciale des consuls, Turquie, Damas) vol. 1-4; CPC/67 (Correspondance politique des consuls, Turquie, Damas) vol. 1-6.

British consular reports kept in the National Archives.[74] I also used Ottoman imperial archives, the Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivleri in Istanbul.[75] In addition, I made a selective use of the court records *(siccileri)* of Damascus kept in the İslam Araştırmaları Merkezi in Istanbul.[76] Finally, for the history of Catholics in Damascus, I analyzed the Archives of the Congregation of the Propaganda Fide in Rome and the Archivio Apostolico of the Vatican.[77]

5. Significance of the Research

This thesis seeks to contribute to a better understanding of inter-confessional relations in Ottoman history, and specifically in *Bilād al-Šām*. The violence of the summer of 1860 in Damascus plays an important role in the memory of inter-confessional relations in Syria. It led to a variety of interpretations that were underlined by political claims and projects. It was used by the Ottoman government to justify further reforms of the 'backward' periphery. Syrian nationalist historiography has rather attributed inter-confessional violence to Ottoman "authoritarianism", informing Arab nationalist discourses regarding the Ottoman past.[78] Others have seen in the violence of 1860 a proof of the pressing need to adopt a secular form of government and public sphere to ward off similar events.[79] The increasing occurrences of inter-confessional violence in the contemporary Middle East has led some to look for the genesis of inter-confessional tensions in the Ottoman past. On the one hand, some discourses present the stereotype of Christians as eternal victims of the region, depriving them of any agency. These narratives of everlasting victimhood and persecution are instrumentalized to feed xenophobic discourses and politics of exclusion in contemporary Europe. On the other

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[73] Centre of Diplomatic Archives of Nantes (AE), 166/PO-Serie D/20 (Correspondance avec les échelles) 1-5; 18/PO- Serie A (Archives rapatriées du consulat de France) vol. 1-12.

[74] Public Record Office, Foreign Office Archives (FO), London, Serie F.O. 195 and 78.

[75] Ottoman Imperial Archives, Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivleri (BOA), Istanbul, Turkey.

[76] Islam Araştırmaları Merkezi, Istanbul, Turkiye Harici siciler, Dimaşk,

[77] Archives of the Congregation of the Propaganda Fide, Rome. Writings referred to the congresses (SC) : First Serie : Letters which reached the Dicastery of Mission lands : Greek Melchites 1682-1862 (25 Volumes), Syria 1860-1892 (4 Volumes); Vatican Apostolic Archives, Rome. Delegazione apostolica al Libano.

[78] Ussama Makdisi, "After 1860: Debating Religion, Reform, and Nationalism in the Ottoman Empire," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 34, no. 4 (2002): 601-602; Deringil, "They Live in a State of Nomadism," 311-342

[79] Ibid, 607.

hand, the enduring image of Christians as fifth column of foreign imperialism informs sectarian discourses which questions the place of Christians in Middle Eastern societies. An analysis of the transformation of inter-confessional relations over time and a better understanding of the underlying dynamics of the violence of 1860 in Damascus can contribute to question both types of discourses based on inaccurate, yet enduring, perceptions of Middle Eastern Christians.[80] It touches upon central aspects of the articulation of inter-confessional relations in the contemporary Middle East and Europe.

6. Structure

To address this research question, this thesis will deal with two intertwined processes, the internal changes of religious communities leading to the confessionalization of Ottoman society and the increasing inter-confessional strife in the mid-19th century. The first part of this thesis will explore the confessionalization of religious communities in Damascus. It is a consequence of a variety of dynamics including strategies of group cohesion, the evolution of rituals and practices and an effort at differentiation. It is also linked to the institutionalization of the *millet* system as part of the *Tanzimat* reforms.

The first chapter will introduce the development of confessional cultures in the 18th and early 19th century. It took the form of an intensification of doctrine, a project of societal reform, new forms of solidarity and identifications. The role of the *Tanzimat* reforms in this process will be explored, while this thesis will also emphasize long term dynamics. Religious communities were imagined in a variety of ways and on different levels and geographies. In general, the identification horizons of Ottoman subjects were widened in this period. This chapter will focus particularly on the *ṯarīqa* Naqšbandīyyā and its role in the confessionalization of Ottoman society.

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[80] On these perceptions see Bernard Heyberger, *Les Chrétiens au Proche-Orient. De la compassion à la compréhension* (Paris: Payot, 2013).

Chapter two and three will in turn shed light on the dynamics within the Greek Catholic community. Chapter two will explore the creation of the Greek Catholic *millet.* It will focus on the increasing need for distinction as a tool of separation from both the Greek Orthodox leadership and missionary influence in the 18th and early 19th century. Furthermore, the paradoxical relationship between local Christians and foreign representatives in the empire will be highlighted. Chapter three will further analyze the institutionalization of the Greek Catholic leadership after its recognition as an Ottoman *millet*. It will point to the process of homogenization and centralization at play in the Greek Catholic *millet* in the first part of the 19th century and the various resistances to it, mirroring state reforms.

Chapter four will turn to similar dynamics within the Jewish community of Damascus. The *Tanzimat,* the transformation of the leadership and foreign intervention changed the rules of access to power and led to a process of centralization provoking oppositions within the Jewish community.

The second part of this thesis will focus on conflicts and competition for access to resources among and between communities, pointing to the politicization of religious identities. While the first part explored long-term developments, the second part will focus on specific moments in which society was polarized along religious lines. This process builds on the development of confessional cultures described in the first part as religious communities which were more clearly defined and centralized could subsequently be turned into bases of political allegiance. This process emphasized the increasing relevance of religious identification for access to resources and political power. Through various case studies, this research will also point to the cross-cutting nature of the process of confessionalization which affected all communities beyond Christian/Muslim relations.

Chapter five will explore the transformation of inter-confessional relations after the turning point of the Crimean war and the Islahat Fermanı reform decree of 1856. How were

inter-confessional relations affected by the *Tanzimat* reforms and the increasing foreign intervention in the empire? This period was characterized by the transformation of social hierarchies. It caused feelings of humiliation among those who lost their privileges and contributed to the impression of a world upside-down. It negatively affected both popular and elite Muslim perceptions of Ottoman Christians.

The abolition of various conditions of the *ḏimmā* status, which had regulated the role of non-Muslims in the Ottoman empire, had strong repercussions across the empire. Chapter six will address various reactions to this changing role of Ottoman non-Muslims. The place of non-Muslims in an Islamic polity was also an integral part of a theological belief about what an Islamic state should be. How did beliefs about the relationship between the imperial leadership and God affect groups' self-definition and how they related to each other? How can attitudes and policies towards non-Muslims be linked to power struggles, relations with the Ottoman center and opinions regarding the state of the empire?

Chapter seven will explore the economic competition over trade, tax-farming and land ownership between Muslim notables, ulema, *āġāwāt*, and Christians under foreign protection in the new political and economic configurations of the *Tanzimat* period. It will highlight individual agency in shaping the application of the reforms at the provincial level and in instrumentalizing sectarian discourses as tools of access to resources.

Chapter eight and nine will look at examples of confessionalization and violence which are less discussed in the scholarship: both within non-Muslim communities and between Christians and Jews. Chapter eight will focus on tensions and violence among Greek Catholics as a result of the transformation of the institutions of the Church. It will focus on the conflicts around the adoption of the Gregorian calendar in the mid-19th century. This event dramatically divided the community, led to a crisis of authority and contributed to popular political mobilization. Chapter nine will explore the increasing confessional consciousness of

Greek Catholics and Jews in Damascus and the repeated conflicts between the two communities.

Finally, chapter ten will analyze the violence of 1860 in the continuity of rebellions against increased taxation and military conscription, mutinies and bread riots in the first part of the 19th century. It will focus on the attack against intermediaries and the transformation of military power affecting relations between religious communities. Inter-confessional violence will be analyzed as a bi-product of state-society relations and governmentality.

PART 1: THE TRANSFORMATION OF RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES IN THE 18TH AND EARLY 19TH CENTURIES

Chapter 1 : Reforming the State and Society: Building Confessional Cultures

The first part of the 19th century was characterized by various projects of transformation of Ottoman society and various ways to imagine community. At the level of the state, the government embarked on a series of administrative, economic, and societal reforms which altered state-society relations and societal hierarchies. Efficiency, centralization, rationality, accountability, authenticity, and distinction were the primary keywords of these transformations which sought to mold the inhabitants of the empire into controllable subjects.[1] Similarly, religious communities in the empire were reconstructed along similar objectives as a result of internal impetus, foreign influences, and government policies. It was accompanied by the confessionalization of Ottoman society, through which religious distinctions were emphasized and religious identities were politicized. Among Muslims, the Sufi *ṭarīqā* Naqšbandīya played a central role in gathering support for the reforms and in politicizing religious identities.

These various ambitions to reform society and religious communities were intertwined with the long term development of the construction of confessional cultures among Christians, Jews, and Muslims. Since the 17th century, religious practices, dogma, and identifications were subjected to heightened social control and homogenization. In the 19th century, this process was intensified and religious communities were increasingly demarcated and shaped according to political objectives, altering the significance of confessional belonging. This new form of local politics, affected by the *Tanzimat* reform, marked the confessionalization of

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[1] Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (New York: Vintage books, 1977), 136.

Ottoman society.[2] This transformation is often presented as a prelude to nationalism.[3] However, this study will highlight the various trajectories of political and confessional belonging which forces us to challenge this narrative which links modernization and nationalism.[4] It will challenge the predominance given to institutions as actors of social change, and point to the underlying dynamics of the construction of confessional cultures before the official institutionalization of the *millet* system.

This chapter will point to these intertwined transformations. It will first explore the development of confessional cultures in the Ottoman Empire through the intensification of religious doctrine and practice and the reinforcement of religious identifications. Second, this chapter will focus on the dynamics of religious reform among Muslims, by focusing on the influence of the *ṭarīqa* Naqšbandīya which played an important role in legitimizing the *Tanzimat* reforms and politicizing religious identities.

1. Development of Confessional Cultures

1.1 Intensification of Religious Identities and Doctrine

The Ottoman Empire, composed of a variety of religious groups, had been characterized by a certain level of confessional ambiguity. Religious communities were highly heterogeneous, spread across the empire and beyond. Religious education was disparate and lacked homogeneity, resulting in a diversity of beliefs and practices. The borders between religious groups were blurry and fluctuated across time and space. Christians, Jews and Muslims were embedded in shared regional cultures with common customs, languages and at times shared religious practices and rituals.[5]

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[2] Makdisi, *Culture of Sectarianism,* 6; Rogan, "Sectarianism", 493-511.
[3] According to Durkheim's analysis of modernization through the waning out of mechanic sociabilities, replaced by organic sociabilities as a result of the creation of modern institutions, Émile Durkheim, *De la division du travail social* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 2013).
[4] Aymes, *A Provincial History*, 26.
[5] Tijana, "State and Religion," 66.

From the 17th century onwards, this confessional ambiguity was identified as problematic. Confessional consciousness was constructed incrementally.[6] Tijana Kristic has addressed the Sunnitization of Ottoman Muslims in this period as a reaction to the rise of the Safavid Shia Empire, which triggered a process of oppositional identity-building on the Ottoman side.[7] It was also a tool of legitimization of the sultan in the face of political defeats in the 16th and 17th century.[8] This process of Sunnitization included an increasing definition of correct beliefs and behavior expected from Muslims and the imposition of these standards on the population.[9] It was done through religious education and the distribution of catechisms, or *Ilmihal,* as well as moralistic literature to the population. *Fiqh*, or Islamic jurisprudence, was increasingly popularized through these means, bringing legal discourses into the daily worship of Ottoman Muslims.[10] These dynamics shaped the Sunni identity of the Ottoman Empire.

Similarly, Bernard Heyberger points to various dynamics which contributed to the building of confessional cultures among Oriental Catholics in the 17th century, including contacts with Europe, missionary influence, political and military propaganda, literacy, and orientalist discourses. It led to a need to reinforce religious borders, emphasize distinction and separation from 'heretics' and from the Muslim environment.[11] Latin missionary influence also included new forms of spirituality and the internalization of faith through devotional practices.[12] Among Jews, since the 17th century, there was a revival of Sephardi identifications and customs, and Lurianic Kaballah mysticism based on a Ladino cultural

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[6] Bernard Heyberger, "Catholicisme et construction des frontières confessionnelles dans l'Orient ottoman," in *Frontières religieuses à l'époque moderne,* dir. Francisco Bethencourt and Denis Crouzet (Paris: Presses Universitaires de la Sorbonne, 2013), 123.
[7] Kristic, "State and Religion," 72, 73.
[8] Krstić, *Narratives of Religious Change,* 108; Terzioglu "Sufis".
[9] Kristic, "State and Religion," 66, 72.
[10] Ibid, 73.
[11] Heyberger, "Catholicisme," 123.
[12] Bernard Heyberger, "Confréries, dévotions et société chez les catholiques orientaux," in *Confréries et dévotions dans la catholicité moderne (mi-XVe-début XIXe siècle)*, dir. Bernard Dompnier and Paola Vismara (Rome: Collection de l'Ecole Française de Rome, 2008), 238.

development brought about by the arrival of Francos, or European Jews, in the empire. It encouraged a sense of a shared religious culture among Ottoman Jews.[13]

The grounds of religious legitimacy were shifting in this period, from tradition and custom to textual evidence, as represented by Protestant teachings but also Wahābī and later Salafi ideologies.[14] The development of printing press and the establishment of missionary schools had a role to play in this transformation.[15] The Ottoman conquest of Arab lands led to the gradual constitution of public archives and the mass production of legal documents. Reem Meshal studied this archival development in Egypt and argued that it encouraged literacy and led to the development of proto-citizenship.[16] In this context, literacy was also developed as a necessity to resist new impositions of the modernizing Ottoman government such as new taxes, which were done through the written word.[17] Dana Sajdi observed the development in the 18th century of what she coins the 'nouveau literacy', that is the production of chronicles by individuals not associated with the *ulema,* who had dominated the field beforehand. These new chroniclers represent the social mobility of the 18th century[18] and the development of a

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[13] Jacob Barnai, "From Sabbateanism to Modernization: Ottoman Jewry on the Eve of the Ottoman Reforms and the Haskala," in *Sephardi and Middle Eastern Jewries: History and Culture in the Modern Era*, ed. Harvey Goldberg (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1996), 75. For an account of the Sabbatean movement see Jacob Barnai, "The Sabbatean movement in Smyrna: the social background," in *Jewish Sects, Religious Movements, and Political Partie*s, ed. Menachem Mor. (Omaha, NE: Creighton University Press, 1992), 113-122.

[14] On the rise of the Salafiyya see Weismann, *Taste of Modernity.*

[15] For an in-depth exploration of the rise of literacy since 18th century, see Dana Sajdi, *The Barber of Damascus, Nouveau Literacy in the Eighteenth-Century Ottoman Levant* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2013); Bernard Heybeger, "Livres et pratique de la lecture chez les chrétiens (Syrie, Liban) XVIIe - XVIIIe siècles," *Revue des mondes musulmans et de la Méditerranée* 87-88 (1999): 209-223; Ami Ayalon, *The Press in the Arab Middle East: A History* (Oxford University Press, 1995).Hanna Dyāb, *D'Alep à Paris : Les pérégrinations d'un jeune Syrien au temps de Louis XIV,* trad. Paule Fahmé Thierry, Bernard Heyberger, Jerôme Lentin (Arles: Sindbad, Actes Sud, 2015); Bernard Heyberger, "Individualism and Political Modernity: Devout Catholic Women in Aleppo and Lebanon. Between the Seventeenth and the Nineteenth Centuries," in *Beyond the Exotic. Women's histories in Islamic Societies,* dir. Amira Sonbol (New York: Syracuse University Press, 2005), 72-74.

[16] Reem Meshal, *Sharia and the Making of the Modern Egyptian Islamic Law and Custom in the Courts of Ottoman Cairo* (Cairo: The American University in Cairo Press, 2014); see also Nelly Hanna ,"The administration of courts in Ottoman Cairo," in *The State and Its Servants: Administration in Egypt from Ottoman Times to the Present,* ed. Nelly Hanna (Cairo: American University in Cairo Press, 1995).

[17] Timothy Fitzgerald, "Reaching the Flocks, Literacy and the Mass Reception of Ottoman Law in the Sixteenth Century Arab World," in *Law and Legality in the* Ottoman Empire *and Republic of Turkey*, ed. Kent F. Schull , M. Safa Saraçoğlu and Robert F. Zens (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2016), 20.

[18] Sajdi, *Barber,* 8.

new 'cultural literacy'.[19] Among Christians, the Catholic reformation encouraged the development of reports and archives among local Christian communities, who also entertained an expanding correspondence with the Congregation of the Propaganda Fide.[20]

The process of the development of confessional cultures included a will to emphasize distinction and separation from other religious communities, especially in the public sphere. Contacts with Europe in the 18th century, in the face of political defeats of the Ottoman Empire and of the development of European imperialist projects over the Ottoman Empire, encouraged Christians to increasingly look to Europe, which underlined their Christian identity in an Islamic state.[21] Similarly, Jews of the Ottoman Empire came increasingly into contact with European Jewry and shared networks of information, individuals and resources which created a sense of common belonging.[22]

In the 19th century this development of confessional cultures was intensified by the institutionalization of the *millet* system and by the reforms of the Ottoman State. Religious identities, which had been reinforced since the 17th century, were increasingly politicized, partaking in the confessionalization of Ottoman society. The first part of the 19th century was characterized by reforms of the Ottoman State which tended towards centralization and rationalization of power relations and saw the influence of reforming approaches to religious practices and identity among Muslims and non-Muslims.

A shared program of reform among religious groups sought to abolish what was deemed to be 'superstitions' and unsanctioned practices.[23] Catholic missionaries, while rejecting the Protestant literal approach to religious texts, sought to clearly distinguish

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[19] Sajdi, Barber, 7.
[20] Heyberger, *Les Chrétiens du Proche-Orient,* 477- 478.
[21] Heyberger, "Catholicisme," 129.
[22] Yair Wallach, "Rethinking the *yishuv*: late-Ottoman Palestine's Jewish communities revisited", Journal of Modern Jewish Studies 16n no. 2 (2017): 286, 287.
[23] See Ussama Makdisi *Artillery of Heaven: American Missionaries and the Failed Conversion of the Middle East* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2008).

orthodoxy from heresies, religion from superstition.[24] Religious fraternities participated in the strengthening of borders.[25] Christian and Jewish fraternities helped to build solidarities and sense of commonness among members of religious communities.[26] Muslim sufi orders also played a role building solidarities among Muslims and reinforcing religious borders.[27] These institutions contributed to the rise of confessional cultures by bridging the gap between lay and clerical elements. Among Jews, the *Haskalah*, or Jewish enlightenment, sought to engage on a different level with religious texts and to get rid of mysticism which was widespread in the Ottoman Empire.[28] The idea to return to a true faith that had been crippled with innovations and deviations was common among different religious groups.

Across the religious spectrum in the Ottoman Empire, ulema, missionaries, clergy members and rabbis attempted to pinpoint innovation and thus determine tradition. However, while the objective was similar, they differed greatly regarding the means used to get rid of these innovations. While Christian missionaries, rabbis and the majority of Muslim scholars emphasized teaching, preaching, and even publications as a way to return to the straight path, others such as some of the followers of the Wahābī doctrine, emphasized coercion or even violence.

The concept of faith itself was transformed in this period. Faith was being transformed from an external marker of identification to a question of inner beliefs.[29] The commitment of Muslims and Christians to the tenants of their faith was being questioned like no time before. Ottoman subjects had not only to to dress like Muslims, Jews and Christians but also to

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[24] See Chantal Verdeil, *La mission jésuite.*

[25] Heyberger," Catholicisme," 138, 140; Heyberger, "Confréries," 238; see also Verdeil, *La mission jésuite*; Girard "Le christianisme oriental," 496.

[26] Roni Weinstein, "Kabbalistic Innovation in Jewish Confraternities in the Early Modern Mediterranean," in *Faith's Boundaries: Laity and Clergy in Early Modern Confraternities,* eds. Nicholas Terpstra, Adriano Prosperi and Stefania Pastore (Turnhout: Brepols, 2012), 241.

[27] Zacorne, *Pour ou contre le monde*, 21. See the role of the Naqšbandīya below.

[28] On the Haskalah in the Ottoman Empire see Tamir Karkason, "The Ottoman-Jewish Haskalah (Enlightenment), 1839-1908: A Transformation in the Jewish Communities of Western Anatolia, the Southern Balkans and Jerusalem," PhD diss., (The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 2018).

[29] Heather Sharkey, *A History of Muslims, Christians and Jews,* 227.

believe and practice according to the accepted dogma.[30] Religious authorities begun to increasingly monitor the religious life of their flock.[31] Similarly to Christian missionaries activities, Sunni ulema were sent to Muslim groups such as Alevis and Shias in order to encourage a "rectifications of doctrine", which intensified during the rule of Sultan Abdulhamid II (1876-1909).[32]

1.2 Reforms, Interstitial Freedom and Confessionalization

The *confessionalization* of Ottoman society was the affected by the reforms of the religious communities' institutions which started in the 18th century. Power in the Ottoman administration was distributed across heterogeneous scales which included a variety of intermediaries and networks. Ottoman Christians and Jews had overlapping social ties and belonged to a variety of social groups. Socioeconomic status, and especially rank, was a strong basis of identification and commonness.[33] As non-Muslims, they were governed both by the Ottoman State apparatus and by their own communal institutions. Confessions themselves were composed of various institutions which shared authority and had various levels of influence over the flock. Within communities various norms coexisted and at times displayed contradictions. In this multiplicity of institutions and social norms, Christians and Jews enjoyed a certain level of agency. This type of agency has been described by Giovanni Levi as interstitial freedom, a liberty to choose authorized by the interstices between governing institutions.[34]

This is especially true of the non-Muslim laity, which had enjoyed a high level of interstitial freedom beforehand. The notables had a major role to play as intermediaries with the different levels of the Ottoman government. In *Bilād al-Šām*, non-Muslims notables

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[30] Ibid, 227.
[31] Deringil, *The Well-Protected Domains,* 69-74.
[32] Sharkey, *A History of Muslims*, *Christians and Jews*, 223.
[33] Makdisi, *Culture of Sectarianism*, 36.
[34] Giovanni Levi, " Les usages de la biographie," *Annales. Economies, sociétés, civilisations* 44, no. 6, (1989): 1325-1336.

reached prominent positions as advisors, scribes or money-lenders to the governors.[35] They were part of their household and managed to build their fortune through this patron-client relationship.[36] The elites had developed a wide network across the Mediterranean and in the empire thanks to dynamics of migration.[37] This international aspect encouraged them to develop close relationships with foreign consuls. This centrality of the elite, usually composed of merchants and scribes, as an intermediary of the community with the Ottoman government and foreign powers gave them a certain level of power over the communal affairs, relegating the religious leadership to a secondary role or at least to a relationship of interdependence with these lay elites.[38] The dispersal of communities over the empire and abroad, had created a heterogeneous system of overlapping jurisdictions and multiple authorities. The religious leadership of non-Muslim communities was characterized by the heterogeneity of norms, rules and the local forms of power relations which lacked an overarching hierarchy. The multiplicity of institutions allowed for the diffused nature of power across the religious leadership.

This interstitial freedom however was challenged by the institutionalization of non-Muslim communities which started in the 18th century as a result of missionary influence but also internal dynamics. This process, similarly to the Ottoman *Tanzimat* reforms, encouraged centralization of resources and the homogenization of norms which ended up reducing individual leeway and freedom. The religious leadership sought to play a more direct role into the communal affairs. In the case of Catholic communities of *Bilād al-Šām*, these transformations were encouraged by the Catholic reform and Roman injunctions. This transformation of non-Muslim communities led to resistance among the population who had

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[35] Makdisi, *Culture of Sectarianism*, 6, 35.
[36] al-Dimašqī, *Tārīḫ*, 79.
[37] See these networks in Ian Coller, *Arab France, Islam and the Making of Modern Europe* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011); Thomas Philipp, *The Syrians in Egypt: 1725-1975* (Stuttgart : Fraz Steiner Verlag, 1985).
[38] Yaron Harel, *Syrian Jewry in Transition, 1840-1880,* trans. Dena Ordan (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2010), 61.

conducted many activities beyond the purview of the state and religious authorities. These resistances in turn caused internal conflicts within communities. At the same time, the homogenization of norms and forms of belonging also contributed to reinforcing confessional identifications. This move towards stronger and more political religious identities encountered the obstacle of other forms of belonging were also politicized: local identity, ʿaṣabīyya and family networks.[39] The development of confessional cultures on the level of the religious community was thus challenged by the politicization of ethnic or local identifications.

While the construction of confessional cultures of non-Muslim communities started before the 19th century, the *Tanzimat* reforms exacerbated these earlier developments and gave the religious authority institutional tools to enforce their centralizing and homogenizing reforms. In the previous centuries, only the Greek Orthodox and Armenian patriarchs benefited from the official recognition of the Ottoman State.[40] The Jewish community was recognized but did not have a similar representative in Istanbul. Starting in the 1830's however, Catholic communities gradually obtained the recognition of the state, and their patriarchs became intermediaries with the Ottoman government, thus changing the balance of power between and within Christian communities.[41] A Jewish *hahambaşı* was named in Istanbul and given a relative authority over all the Jewish communities in the empire, which was a departure from the traditional autonomy these various communities had enjoyed beforehand.[42] The institutionalization of non-Muslim communities and new role given to patriarchs and *hahambaşılar* in this period gave rise to strong internal oppositions, especially from those who had benefited from some level of autonomy, or interstitial freedom beforehand.

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[39] Heyberger,"Confréries," 240.
[40] Masters, "The Establishment," 459.
[41] Ibid.
[42] Avigdor Levy, "*Millet* Politics, the Appointment of a Chief Rabbi in 1835," in *The Jews of the Ottoman Empire*, ed. Avigdor Levy (Princeton, N.J.: Darwin Press, 1994), 434.

Simultaneously with the institutionalization of non-Muslim communities, the Ottoman reforms delegitimized the natural corps, or *ṭaʾifa*, such as clan, tribe, socioeconomic status, professional corporations, and gave the individual a space of autonomy and self-development.[43] By abolishing various privileges of the ruling class, the Ottoman government sought to equalize the status of Ottoman subjects and put them at equi-distance from the state. This assault on privilege percolated on all the levels of Ottoman society. Christians and Jews started to challenge the privilege of Muslims within the Ottoman state structure, Catholic patriarchs challenged the privilege of the Orthodox patriarchs, Christian and Jews challenged the privilege of the high clergy or of certain families and inhabitants of certain cities over the community institutions. In the same manner, the privilege of *āšrāf* families was being challenged by newcomers who demanded to be recognized as equals.[44] Inherited privilege based on family line or status group or hierarchy was increasingly questioned and delegitimized. In this process, socioeconomic statuses lost their identification power and were gradually replaced by membership in a religious group, reinforcing the strength of the process of confessionalization.[45]

1.3 Looking Inwards and Abroad : New Solidarities and Internationalization

This confessionalization of Ottoman society was exacerbated by the events which took place in the late 18th century and early 19th century. The increasing intervention of foreign powers in the Ottoman Empire was accompanied by sectarian narratives of Christianity against Islam, which tainted the interpretation of other local events. Foreign intervention contributed to building dichotomous discourses of Christians against Muslims in *Bilād al-Šām*. This dynamic is observable in the accounts of political battles by contemporary chroniclers. The account by the chronicler Rūfāʾīl Karāma and Miḫaʾil al Dimašqī of the battle over Beirut

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[43] Roderic H Davidson, *Reform in the Ottoman Empire 1856-1876* (Princetown: Princetown University Press, 1963), 7.
[44] Yūsuf Ğamīl Naʿīsa, *Muğtamaʿ Madīnat Dimašq 1772–1840,* vol. 2 (Damascus: Dar Tlas, 1994), 450.
[45] Makdisi, *Culture of Sectarianism,* 36.

which opposed the Ottoman governor Ahmad Paşa al-Cezzar and Yūsuf Šihāb, the ruler of Mount Lebanon exemplifies this discourse.

Cezzar Ahmed Paşa was appointed governor of Sidon in 1776. He started a process of centralization, which he wished to extend to Mount Lebanon. Yūsuf Šihāb, the ruler of Mount Lebanon, had grown worried about the influence of the ruler of Palestine, Ẓāhir āl-ʿUmar, and had called upon Cezzar Ahmed Paşa to Beirut in 1772 to check on Ẓāhir āl-ʿUmar 's ambitions.[46] Yet, when Cezzar Ahmed Paşa arrived he did not wield to the conditions of his agreement with Yūsuf Šihāb and started to expropriate the properties of the Šihāb family and their vassals and turned them into state property.[47] The property of the Šihāb family was turned into state property (*miri*). He also effectively separated Beirut from Mount Lebanon.[48] Cezzar Ahmed Paşa was the first governor to directly intervene into the affairs of Mount Lebanon.[49] He took control of the agriculture and commerce by placing himself as an intermediary, and imposed both taxes on *miri* lands and custom duties.[50] In this sense, he was an instrument of provincial centralization.[51] However, his actions were subsequently read through a sectarian narrative emphasizing a zero-sum game between Christians and Muslims.

When he ruled Beirut, churches were turned into horse stables and many Christians were attacked.[52] Miḫāʾīl al-Dimašqī mentioned that when Cezzar Ahmed Paşa took control of Beirut, 'Islam was happy of his behavior'.[53] Cezzar Ahmed Paşa relied on Druze chiefs to conduct his centralization process, thus turning them into targets of popular resentment.[54] Yūsuf Šihāb finally turned to Ẓāhir āl-ʿUmar, who also gained the allegiance of the Shia clans.

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[46] al-Dimašqī, *Tārīḫ,* 68.
[47] Samir Khalaf, *Civil and Uncivil Violence, A History of the Internationalization of a Communal Conflict* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002), 69, 71.
[48] Ibid, 71.
[49] Ibid, 65.
[50] Ibid, 71.
[51] Ibid, 65.
[52] Karamā, *Ḥawadiṯ Lubnān,* 42.
[53] al-Dimašqī, *Tārīḫ,* 69.
[54] Khalaf, *Civil and Uncivil Violence,* 71.

He asked for Russian help to take control of Beirut from Cezzar Ahmed Paşa and successfully pushed him away.[55]

Russia was involved in a war with the Ottoman Empire which lasted from 1768 to 1774. In 1770. The Ottomans had suffered a crashing defeat and the destruction of their fleet at the battle of Chesma which had shocked the population. Following this battle, the Russians won control of the Agean.[56] This event marked the beginning of successive victories on the part of Russia against the Ottoman Empire, which encouraged the sultans to reform their military apparatus. As such, the call upon Russia was not well received by the Ottoman government. The fact that under the reign of Yūsuf Šihāb, many members of his family, including himself, had converted from Sunni Islam to Maronite Christianity, shaped the sectarian understanding of this conflict as a struggle between Christians and Muslims supported respectively by Christian European powers and the Ottoman government. When Cezzar Ahmed Paşa was eventually defeated by the Russian fleet allied with Ẓāhir āl-ʿUmar and Yūsuf Šihāb, Beirut was freed and Rūfāʿīl Karāma mentioned that Christians rose freely flags with crosses over the city, without any opposition.[57] Here the crosses hint both at the religious dogma of Christianity and at political power of the Beirut Christian inhabitants allied with the Šihāb emirs.

These narrations show the beginning of the politicization of religious identities in the figure of Cezzar Ahmed Paşa. When he was victorious, it was seen to benefit Muslims, while he actually frustrated the interests of Muslim notables, and when he was defeated it was seen as a victory of Christians. In the contemporary chronicles, the Šihāb emirs are portrayed as the protectors and champion of Christians, while Cezzar Ahmed Paşa assumed the role of

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[55] Thomas Philipp, *Acre: The Rise and Fall of a Palestinian City, 1730-1831* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001), 42.
[56] Barbara Jelavich, *History of the Balkans* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 69.
[57] Karamā, *Ḥawadiṯ*, 42-44.

champion of the Ottoman State and Islam.[58] This dichotomous view of the power dynamics is obviously an oversimplification, and these chroniclers do contradict their own narrative by pointing to the complexity of power relations of Mount Lebanon and shifting alliances. Yet, the arrival of the Russian navy to Beirut undeniably played a role in this dichotomous reading of the Šihābī dynasty as champions of Christianity.

The events of the late 18th century, and especially the Russian-Ottoman war, marked public consciences and shaped sectarian narratives of *Bilād al-Šām*.[59] In addition, the conquest of Egypt by Napoleon Bonaparte in 1798 marked the memories of the inhabitants of *Bilād al-Šām*. Being the first European conquest in the Ottoman Arab lands, it was a considerable subject of discussion and shaped the local perception of French and later British and Russian political aims in the empire. The conquest of Egypt is usually presented as the turning point marking the advent of modernity in the modern Middle East. This view has been challenged by the recent scholarship.[60] The turning point is rather to be found in the domain of public imagination. Indeed, the invasion of Egypt had long lasting effects for the nature of inter-confessional relations and the way the political role of religious communities were imagined. It materialized the imperial aims of European countries, especially France,[61] and marked the start of on the ground military interventions in the Ottoman Empire. It led to a backlash against Christians, accused of doubtful political loyalty, in various cities of the region.[62] It was followed by the Greek revolt in 1821 and the French conquest of Algeria in 1830. As such, it gave rise to a variety of fears and suspicions regarding the political objectives of foreigners in the empire, be they consuls or merchants. In addition, this perception of foreign threat became intertwined with a vision of Ottoman Christians as a fifth

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[58] Ibid

[59] Ibid.

[60] Juan Cole, *Invading the Middle East* (New York: Palgrave Macmillian, 2007), 246-247; Peter Gran, "Egypt and Italy, 1760-1850 Towards a Comparative History," in *Society and Economy in Egypt and the Eastern Mediterranean 1600- 1900, Essays in Honor of Andre Raymond*, eds. Nelly Hanna and Raouf Abbas (Cairo: The American University in Cairo Press, 2005), 11. Sharkey, *A History*, 14.

[61] Sharkey, *A History*, 15.

[62] Grehan, "Imperial Crisis," 505.

column, facilitating these imperial goals. It was thus an important basis of sectarian discourses.[63]

2. Reforming Society : Movements of Religious Reform

2.1 The Tanzimat and Religious Reforms

The *ṭarīqā* Naqšbandīya played an important role in the confessionalization of Ottoman society during the *Tanzimat* reforms. The *Tanzimat* reforms are at times approached as a linear process of centralization which started in 1839 and ended at the end of the 19th century. However, as argued by recent work on the Ottoman Empire, the *Tanzimat* reforms were actually composed of a variety of periods in which aims and means shifted according to the response of the society, international relations, and power struggles among decision-makers in Istanbul.[64] They had antecedents in the 18th century, yet for the purpose of this inquiry we will focus on two main periods. The first period started in the 1830's at the end of the reign of Sultan Mahmud II and ended in the mid-1850's with the rise of Fuad and Ali Paşa. The second period started in the aftermath of the Crimean war in 1856 and lasted until the rise of Sultan Abdülhamid in 1876. The first period, which will be explored in this chapter, was characterized by modernizing reforms of the army and administration, as well as by a centralization of economic, political an financial resources. The policy makers justified reforms by a need to strengthen the empire against foreign powers in a context of repeated military losses, to get rid of corruption and to ensure the rights of Ottoman subjects to win their loyalty. Through this period, the reforms were presented as a return to the Islamic ideals of justice and fairness in order to strengthen Ottoman society, using the traditional Islamic image of the circle of justice.[65] According to Bourdieu, the summoning of religious

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[63] Ibid, 15.
[64] Etienne E. Charrière and Monica M. Ringer, " Introduction," in *Ottoman Culture and the Project of Modernity: Reform and Translation in the Tanzimat Novel* , eds. Monica M. Ringer & Etienne E. Charrière (London: I.B. Tauris, 2020), 3, 6, 8.
[65] Butrus Abu-Manneh, "The Islamic Roots of the Gülhane Rescript," *Die Welt des Islams* 34 (1994): 202. The circle of justice is an Islamic political concept which makes a link of causality between a just government, the prosperity of subjects, the financial resources of the state and military power. This concept is based upon the idea

obedience as a response to defeat and weakness is a common trope.[66] The Ottoman government relied on this trope and put forward the argument that the lack of religious obedience was responsible for divisions among the *umma*,[67] and thus weakness in front of the enemy. The Ottoman State embraced this causal relationship to foster the unity and loyalty of its subjects.[68]

The 1839 decree of Gülhane, which was central to the Ottoman reforms, reflected this ideal of the circle of justice. Drafted by bureaucrats, it aimed to limit the arbitrary power of the sultan and to guarantee individual rights to Ottoman subjects. The decree introduced the idea of universal military conscription as well as the imposition of a wealth-based tax, to relieve the less well-off.[69] The decree did not mention directly non-Muslims but did not exclude them, either. Rather, it was addressed to all Ottoman subjects.[70] This decree was seen as a pledge from the sultan to put an end to the oppression of the population by governors, to respect the subjects' individual freedoms and rights, thus introducing for the first time a contractual state-society relationship similar to the notion of citizenship. The decree of 1839 then underlined religious freedom, which was seen by some as allowing conversion out of Islam, thus marking a break with former restrictions and shifting the meaning of faith.[71]

The emphasis on individual rights was a tool to build loyalty among the empire's subjects in a period of secession and rebellion. It turned subjects into proto-citizens, with rights but also duties. It followed similar developments in Russia, Prussia, and France in the

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that good governance is what allows the survival of the state. On the history of this notion see: Linda T. Darling, *A History of Social Justice and Political Power in the Middle East: The Circle of Justice From Mesopotamia to Globalization (*Oxon: Taylor & Francis, 2013); Moshe Gammer, "The Ottoman reforms and Cheikh Shamil," in *Ottoman Reform and Muslim Regeneration*, dir. Itzchak Weismann and Fruma Zachs (London, New York: I.B Tauris, 2005), 61.

[66] Violaine Roussel, "Le droit et ses formes. Éléments de discussion de la sociologie du droit de Pierre Bourdieu," *Droit et société, no. 56-57, (*2004/1): 50.

[67] Religious community of Muslims.

[68] Butrus Abu-Manneh, "The Islamic Roots," 202.

[69] See a translation of the Gülhane edict in Jacob C. Hurewitz ed., *The Middle East and North Africa in World politics (*New Haven: Yale University Press 1975-79) vol. 1, 269 and in Masters, *Christians and Jews,* 135.

[70] Hurewitz*, The Middle East,* vol 1, 316-318.

[71] Selim Deringil, "There is no Compulsion in Religion: On Conversion and Apostasy in the Late Ottoman Empire: 1839-1856," *Comparative Study of Society and History* 42, no. 3 (2000): 556.

18th and 19th century where individual rights were awarded in exchange for conscription and taxation.[72] Granting individual rights also helped pave the way to the fiscal reforms and centralization which defined the *Tanzimat* period.

The decree of 1839 aimed at facilitating the centralization of the empire and creating a modern state. However, it did so by relying on concepts well-embedded in Ottoman society and Islamic law. Thus, contrary to the following decree of 1856 which arose strong opposition from among the population, the decree of 1839 was not seen as a break with the past but rather as a reorganization aiming to reach the just basis of Ottoman governance.

These changes represented the ideas of a certain group of bureaucrats, moved by reforms taking place in European states but also by Islamic ideals of the just ruler.[73] Bureaucrats who were instrumental in crafting the decree, such as Mustafa Reşid Paşa, were moved by Islamic ideals and ideas of reform promoted by the *ṭarīqa*[74] Naqšbandīya-Mujadidīya, to which many of the government officials belonged.

The Naqšbandīya had been revived in the Mughal empire since the 16th century. In India, the Naqšbandī shaykh Ahmed Sirhindi (1564-1624) created his own branch of the *ṭarīqa* called the Naqšbandīya-Mujadidīya. He emphasized the need to follow both the *šarīʿa* (the law) and the sufi way (*ṭarīqa*). He was adamant to avoid what he saw as innovations introduced into Sufism such as certain practices of the intercession of saints, idolatry, trances, and dances. He also fought syncretic attempts with Hinduism by the Mughal Emperor Akbar. He saw the ulema as advisers of kings and emperors and parted with a tradition of shunning from political power. He thus opened the way for political activism.[75]

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[72] James C. Scott, *Decoding Subaltern Politics: Ideology, Disguise, and Resistance in Agrarian Politics* (Oxon: Routledge, 2012) 111.
[73] Selim Deringil, *Conversion and Apostasy in the Late* Ottoman Empire, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012) 34, 38.
[74] Religious fraternity.
[75] John Obert Voll, *Islam, Continuity and Change in the Modern World* (Boulder, Colo. Harlow, Essex, England: Westview Press, Longman, 1982), 58-60.

The Naqšbandīya-Mujaddidīya spread westward with the arrival of Ahmed Sirhindi's deputies to Istanbul and Damascus. In Damascus, the deputy from Central Asia, Muḥammad Murād al-Buḫārī, was quite successful in establishing the *ṭarīqa* in the city and his family obtained the monopoly on the *Ḥanafī* mufti position, thus benefiting from great political and spiritual power. Murād al-Buḫārī benefited from the patronage of Sultan Mustafa II (1695-1703) who granted him properties in the city.[76] In Istanbul, many important ulema were also part of Sufi orders and among them the most successful were the Ḫalwātiyya[77] and the Naqšbandīya.

During the *Tanzimat*, the *ṭarīqa* Naqšbandīya became influential in Istanbul as well as in cities of *Bilād al-Šām*.[78] The relationship between the Ottoman State and this *ṭarīqa* evolved through the first part of the 19th century. *Ṭuruq,* with their flexible structure and large geographical spam had often been instrumentalized by the Ottoman government as a tool of loyalty-building and territorial expansion. For example, the *ṭarīqa* Baktāšīya was a precious tool of conversion of the Christians in the Balkans until the 17th century, because it presented a syncretic approach to Islam which included various Christian concepts and rituals, as well as Shia practices.[79] It was closely linked to the Janissary institution. In Central Asia, the Baktāšīya's syncretic approach facilitated Ottoman conquests and helped win the loyalty of certain groups such as the Shias in Anatolia.[80] In the 19th century however, expansion was no longer on the agenda, and the Ottoman government rather needed to foster unity among its subjects.

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[76] Voll, *Islam,* 39.

[77] A *ṭarīqā* founded in Khorasan which emphasized ascetic lifestyle and individualism. It played an important role in the Urabi revolt in Egypt in 1879-1882; See Donald Reid, "The 'Urabi Revolution and the British Conquest, 1879–1882" in *The Cambridge History of Egypt*, ed. M. W. Daly, The Cambridge History of Egypt (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).

[78] 'Abd al-Majīd al-Ḫānī, *al-Ḥadāʾiq al-wardīyā fī ḥaqāʾiq aġlāʾ al-Naqšbandīyā,* ed. ʿA. Maḥmūd (Irbil: Maṭbʿa wazāra al-Tarbiyya, 2002), 337.

[79] Baer, *Honored by the Glory of Islam*, 22.

[80] Butrus Abu Manneb, *Studies on Islam and the Ottoman Empire in the 19th Century (1826-1876),* Analecta Isisiana (Istanbul: The Isis Press, 2001), 60.

The Janissaires, associated with the Baktāšīya, were abolished in 1826 because of their inability to avoid the secession of Greece. However, they continued to exist in various cities of the provinces such as Damascus. They were accused of being ill-prepared and too immersed into civil life to defend the empire. The loyalty of Baktāšī adepts in this conflict was questioned because of their role in the Balkans. As a consequence, numerous ulema and bureaucrats of the Baktāšī order lost their positions, were exiled or even killed.[81] Some of them were sent away to rectify their beliefs with the help of Naqšbandī shaykhs.[82] The belongings of the Baktāšīya were given to the public treasury.[83] The government turned to a *ṭarīqa* which fostered unity of practices and beliefs such as the Naqšbandīya. It replaced the Baktāšīya and took over the their lodges.[84] The Naqšbandīya was this able to grow considerably from this point onward.[85] The *ṭarīqa* Naqšbandīya was the ideal candidate to replace the Baktāšīya. These two Sufi orders differed in their mystical approach, while members of the Baktāšīya chose withdrawal from the world, the Naqšbandīya rather encouraged its adepts to act for the world, spurring activism.[86] The Naqšbandīya's program of reform of Islamic societies, its insistence on obedience to the ruler and its ideals of return to the *šarīʿa* fitted the Ottoman State's centralization aims and the legitimization discourse of the sultan in the 19th century as *amīr al-muʾminīm*.

Pertev Paşa, a Naqšbandī, crafted a decree to abolish the Baktāšīya in which he described members of this *ṭarīqa* as heretics, *alevis,* and *revafiz.* He referred to the Baktāšī lodges as places of promotion of Shiism.[87] They are accused of corrupting Janissaires and showing them the way to rebellion, as a consequence of what he perceived at their rebellious

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[81] Abu-Manneh, *Studies on Islam,* 10-11.
[82] Ibid, 68, 69.
[83] Ibid.
[84] Ibid, 10-11.
[85] Kemal H. Karpat, *The Politicization of Islam: Reconstructing Identity, state, Faith, and Community in the Late Ottoman State* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 111.
[86] Thierry Zacorne,"Pour ou contre le monde, une approche des sociabilités mystiques musulmanes dans l'Empire ottoman", in *Vivre dans l'Empire ottoman,* eds. François Georgeon et Pierre Dumont (Paris, L'Harmattan, 1997), 21, 25.
[87] Abu-Manneh, *Studies on Islam,* 68, 69.

attitude towards the *šarīʿa*.[88] The link between religious deviance and political rebellion is clear in this decree. The discourse of legitimization of the reforms relied on this interaction between adherence to religious norms and political loyalty.

The Ottoman government instrumentalized the *ṭarīqa* Naqšbandīya to legitimize the *Tanzimat* reforms. However, to nuance this image of a top-down instrumentalization, it should be highlighted that numerous decision-makers and bureaucrats who crafted the reforms, such as Pertev Paşa, Mustafa Reşid, and Sadık Rıfat Paşa, were themselves members of the *ṭarīqa*. They had risen to power under Sultans Selim III and Mahmud II.[89] These bureaucrats and members of the Naqšbandīya had an important role to play in crafting the reforms and merging the needs of the state with a discourse of societal reform based on Islamic ideals.

Members of the Naqšbandīya are indeed found among the four main institutions of the Ottoman State, the *ilmiye,*[90] the *mülkiye*,[91] the *seyfiye*[92] and the *kalemiye*.[93] The Ottoman ruling elite in the early 19th century was divided between two main political factions based on these different institutions. On the one hand, the bureaucrats as members of the *kalemiye* were linked to the new institutions, the Translation Bureau[94] and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and wished to expand the role of these new institutions. On the other hand, members of the Palace faction were in the entourage of the sultan and in the military establishment. They were represented by the Grand Vizier. They supported the power of the sultan against the bureaucrats who increasingly obtained decision-making prerogatives in this period.[95]

Albeit these power struggles between the two institutions of the bureaucracy and the Palace, Naqšbandī bureaucrats, military leaders and ulema shared the common perceived need

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[88] Ibid, 50.
[89] Florian Riedler, "Opposition to the *Tanzimat* state : conspiracy and legitimacy in the Ottoman Empire, 1859-1878" (PhD diss., SOAS, 2003), 37.
[90] Religious establishment.
[91] Palace or imperial institution.
[92] Military institution.
[93] Administrative institution.
[94] Tercüme odası.
[95] Carter Vaughn Findley, *Bureaucratic Reform in the* Ottoman Empire *: The Sublime Porte, 1789-1922* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980), 153.

for reform in this first period of the *Tanzimat*. Both the military leaders and the bureaucrats saw in the elite ulema a source of weakness of the sultan.[96] For example, Mahmud Nedim, a member of the Palace, saw the ulema who monopolized the important positions in the Ottoman state structure as an obstacle on the path of unity and strength of the empire. In his view, the corruption of the elite ulema was the cause of all the issues facing the empire.[97] Ulema which had secondary positions within the religious institutions also shared this criticism towards elite ulema. For example Muḥammad Āmin ibn ʿĀbidīn, the leading Ḥanafī scholar of Damascus criticized the economic activities of this group.[98] There was a strong concern with the corruption of the elite which was seen as weakening the empire from the inside.

While the identification with the *ṭarīqa* created some commonness among the members, they did differ significantly on a variety of issues, including the desirable extent of the reforms. Divergences emerged regarding a specific aspect of this program of reform: the need for consultation. Both groups agreed that the sultan needed to base his decisions on consultations, yet they differed regarding who was to be involved in these discussions. On the one hand, bureaucrats considered that the sultan had to respect the fundamental rights of protection of life, honor, and property as well as the right to a fair trial, in order to ensure security, commerce, and production.[99] In addition, according to them, the sultan had to respect laws crafted by bureaucrats.[100] Their political ideals resembled an authoritarian regime based upon the rule of law, similarly to the Habsburg empire.[101] They wished to put an end to the ill-treatment of bureaucrats and civil servants by the sultan, whose properties

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[96] Findley, *Bureaucratic*, 153; Butrus Abu-Manneh, "The Sultan and the Bureaucracy: The Anti-*Tanzimat* Concepts of Grand Vizier Mahmud Nedim Pasa" *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 22, no. 3 (August 1990): 262.

[97] Abu-Manneh, "The Sultan and the Bureaucracy," 261.

[98] Itzchak Weismann,"Law and Sufism on the Eve of Reform: The Views of Ibn 'Abidin," in *Ottoman Reform and Muslim Regeneration,* dir. Itzchak Weismann and Fruma Zachs (New York: I.B Tauris, 2005), 72.

[99] Deringil, *Conversion and Apostasy,* 34.

[100] Şerif Mardin, *The Genesis of Young Ottoman Thought : A Study in the Modernization of Turkish Political Ideas* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1962), 182.

[101] Deringil, *Conversion and Apostasy,* 31.

were often confiscated without reason and were victims of exaction especially under Mahmud II. In order to ensure the fundamental rights of Ottoman subjects through the rule of law, the bureaucrats sought to limit the discretionary power of the sultan and create a legal basis to ensure the security of government employees.[102]

At the same time, the bureaucrats also wished to increase their position within the government hierarchy, by demanding to benefit from the same privileges enjoyed by the ulema and members of the military.[103] The ulema and military classes were the pillars of the Ottoman government and as such benefited from a variety of advantages. The bureaucrats, wished to become the third pillar of the Ottoman state structure.

The ulema, on the other hand, considered that they should be the ones consulted by the sultan because they based their expertise on Islamic sciences and were the only ones who could craft laws according to Islamic ideals and *fiqh*.[104] This idea of the centrality of the ulema as advisers of the sultan is not new and has been emphasized by al-Ghazālī, who was read extensively in the 18th and 19th century.[105] Both the bureaucrats and the ulema saw themselves as the institution that could put a limit to the sultan's will. However in the 1840's, these two objectives coincided for the bureaucrats in charge wished to base their legislation on Islamic law and relied on the ulema as interpreters of the *šarīʿa*. This cohesion will however be challenged in the mid-19th century.

Finally, members of the military and the palace did not wish to wield political power to the new bureaucratic institutions and thus rather emphasized the decision-making power of

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[102] Mardin, *Genesis*, 185 ; Tufan S. Buzpinar, "The Question of the Caliphate under the last Ottoman Sultans," in *Ottoman Reform and Muslim Regeneration*, dir. Itzchak Weismann and Fruma Zachs (New York: I.B. Tauris, 2005), 24.
[103] Mardin, *Genesi*s, 185.
[104] Weismann*,"*Law and Sufism,*"* 73.
[105] Gilbert Delanoue, *Moralistes et politiques musulmans dans l'Egypte du XIXe siècle* (Cairo: Inst. Français d'Archéologie Orientale du Caire, 1982), 46.

the sultan. The military had been on board for the reforms of the army and the abolition of the Janissaries, but many of them were not eager to expand the reforms to other institutions.[106]

Members of the *ṭarīqa* Naqšbandīya were found among both factions. On the one side, there were the bureaucrats who inspired the decree of 1839 and gravitated around Mustafa Reşid Paşa, the Ottoman ambassador to Paris and London in the 1830's and the minister of foreign affairs in 1839.[107] He was named Grand Vizier from 1846 until 1852. Together with other bureaucrats such as Sadık Rıfat, also minister of foreign affairs,[108] he was an disciple of the aforementioned Naqšbandī Pertev Paşa, who had drafted the decree against the Janissaries,[109] and had been involved in the redaction of the Gülhane decree.[110] Pertev Paşa traced his Naqšbandīya lineage to the Indian Shah Gulham Ali Dehlavi. Indeed, he was a disciple of Ali Bahcet, himself a disciple of Mehmed Emin Bursali, a deputy of Muhammad Jan, the famous deputy of Shah Gulham Ali Dehlavi.[111] The mother of the young Sultan Abdülmecid was also a follower of Muhammad Jan.[112] Most of the Naqšbandī bureaucrats had been introduced to the *ṭarīqa* by some disciples of Shah Gulham Ali Dehlavi, such a Muhammad Jan. They were thus members of the Naqšbandīya-Mujaddīdiya.

On the other hand, there were also Naqšbandī followers within the Palace faction. Hüsrev Paşa for example, the war minister from 1827 to 1837, was involved in spreading the *ṭarīqa*, built a Naqšbandī lodge in Emirgan, and financed a *zāwīya* in 1834.[113] He was opposed to the reforms that were not in the military field.[114] Hüsrev Paşa strongly opposed

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[106] Mardin, *Genesis*, 212.
[107] Abu-Manneh, "The Islamic Roots," 186.
[108] Abu-Manneh, *Studies on Islam,* 106, 109.
[109] M. Alper Yalçinkaya, *Learned Patriots: Debating Science, state, and Society in the Nineteenth Century Ottoman Empire* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2015), note 11, 246.
[110] He was ultimately killed by Mahmud II. Abu-Manneh, "The Islamic Roots," 187.
[111] Mardin, *Genesis,* 187.
[112] Abu-Manneh, *Studies on Islam,* 102.
[113] Ibid, 44.
[114] Mardin, *Genesis*, 212.

Mustafa Reşid Paşa because he held him responsible for favoring foreign intervention in the empire.[115] Hüsrev Paşa was dismissed in 1840, when the bureaucrats took over.

The early 1840's represent the apogee of power of the bureaucrats, they were able to gain some ground thanks to the success of Mustafa Reşid Paşa in convincing France and Great Britain to side with the Ottoman government and push back Muḥammad ʿAlī, the governor of Egypt who had attempted to take control of *Bilād al-Šām*.[116] They passed the 1839 Gülhane decree and secured a central position for the newly created bureaucratic institutions.[117] In the provinces, councils were created to help the governor in the decision-making process.[118] The criminal code promulgated in 1840 limited the use of force on the part of military leaders, governors but also the sultan himself.[119]

The Ottoman government's main worry in this period was the Wahābī control of the holy places Mecca and Medina, which threatened the conduct of the pilgrimage. The governor of Damascus, Abdullah Paşa, could not conduct the *hajj* in 1802 with serious negative economic and political repercussion.[120] The Wahābī takeover of the holy sites was the direct consequence of the alliance of the thoughts of the 18th century ʿālim Muḥammad bin ʿAbd al-Waḥāb and the political leader Muḥammad ibn Saʿūd. The latter's son conquered Mecca and Medina in 1805. The Wahābī doctrine's main idea, which was influenced by the 13th century scholar Ibn Taymīyyā, was that those who call themselves Muslims but engage in practices that he described as *širk* (among others: belief in intercession of the deceased, associating something with God) cannot be considered Muslims, and thus do not benefit from

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[115] Findley, *Bureaucratic reform,* 153.

[116] Caroline Finkel, *Osman's dream, The Story of the* Ottoman Empire *1300-1923* (London: John Murray, 2006), 444.

[117] Ibid, 449.

[118] Elisabeth Thomson, "Ottoman Political Reform in the Provinces: The Damascus Advisory Council in 1844-45," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 25, no. 3 (1993): 457.

[119] Kent F. Schull, "Criminal Codes, Crime, and the Transformation of Punishment in the Late Ottoman Empire," in *Law and Legality in the* Ottoman Empire *and Republic of Turkey*, ed. Kent F. Schull , M. Safa Saraçoğlu and Robert F. Zens (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2016), 159.

[120] al-Dimašqī, *Tārīḫ ḥawādiṯ,* 107; David Dean Commins, *Islamic Reform : Politics and Social Change in Late Ottoman Syria,* Studies in Middle Eastern History (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990), 22.

inviolability of life and property as Muslims. Based on this understanding, they denied the status of Muslim to a vast amount of inhabitants of the Ottoman Empire, especially to the inhabitants of *Bilād al-Šām* and Anatolia, known for the various practices that the Wahābī labeled as *širk.* By this practice of *takfīr*, excluding Muslims from the *umma*,[121] the Wahābī thinkers could make legal the fact of attacking the Ottoman sultan by declaring his lack of legitimacy because of his encouragement of *širk* practices, stripping him of his title of caliph and thus rendering his control of Mecca and Medina illegitimate.[122] Another main criticism directed towards the Ottoman government, was the power it delegated to Christian and Jewish subjects in issues of governance. This influence of non-Muslims was used by the Wahābī thinkers to question the Islamic nature of the Ottoman State.[123]

If the Wahābī did not generate a widespread consent for their ideology in Damascus, rather the contrary, they influenced the way Ottoman policy-makers responded to arising threats to the legitimacy of the state. Their criticism regarding the place of non-Muslims in society resonated strongly in the public discourse of the 19th century regarding the place of non-Muslims in Ottoman society. It participated both to the intensification of a Muslim confessional culture, by marking the borders of the community and by practices of exclusion, and to the politicization of religious identities.

2.2. Shaykh Ḫalid in Damascus

The Wahābī-Saʿūdī alliance was not satisfied with the sole control of the holy places of Mecca and Medina, and they reached the south of *Bilād al-Šām* in the years 1803-1812, during the governorship of Yusuf Genç Paşa in Damascus. The governor Yusuf Genç Paşa had promised the Ottoman government that he could be victorious against the Wahābī threat, which led to his appointment.[124] The Wahābī ulema sent invitations to Damascene ulema to

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[121] Muslim community.
[122] Commins, *Islamic Reform,* 23.
[123] David Dean Commins, *The Wahhabi Mission and Saudi Arabia* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2006), 23.
[124] al-Dimašqī, *Tārīḫ,* 110.

join their ideology and political project, but received a cold response. The ulema of Damascus agreed that there were some issues with the ways some Muslims conducted religious practice but they argued that this did not strip the individual of his Muslim identity.[125] They agreed with the need for some elements of reforms but reminded the Wahābī ulema that to kill an innocent Muslim is the worst of sins. The beliefs of the Wahābī were for Damascene ulema a deviation from the right path.[126] In this assessment, they concurred with the ideas of a prominent member of the Naqšbandīya, the Kurdish shaykh Ḫalid al-Baġdādī, who was the main actor of the *ṭarīqa* Naqšbandīya in the 19th century.

In order to better understand the role of the Naqšbandīya in the 19th century, it is useful to address Shaykh Ḫalid al-Baġdādī's personal history. He was born in the Kurdish region of the Ottoman Empire, more precisely in Shahrizur close to Sulaymānīya, which was the seat of the Baban princes. Ḫalid al-Baġdādī studied religious sciences and later taught in Sulaymānīya. This region was part of the Ottoman Empire but benefited from a certain level of autonomy in exchange for its role in defending the empire against the Qajars in the 19th century. Already in the 17th century, the Naqšbandīya had been mobilized politically in Kurdistan, Northern Iraq, where it accompanied the Ottoman war efforts against the Safavid Empire. The Naqšbandīya was thus used as a tool of loyalty building in frontier areas. Through this role however, the Sunni identity of the Naqšbandīya was reinforced and polarized against a Shia other. The war effort also led to the centralization of the organization of the *ṭarīqa* under a few shaykhs who enjoyed political and spiritual power, such as Shaykh Mahmud Umaravi.[127] This politically charged environment influenced Ḫalid al-Baġdādī who became a main figure of the Naqšbandīya an important actor of the *Tanzimat* period.

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[125] Commins, *Islamic Reform*, 24.
[126] Ibid.
[127] Diane Le Gall, *A Culture of Sufism : Naqshbandīs in the Ottoman World, 1450-1700,* "Suny Series in Medieval Middle East History" (Albany: state University of New York Press, 2005), 141.

Ḫalid al-Baġdādī went to Mecca for *hajj* in 1805 and witnessed the Wahābī take-over, which he saw in an unfavorable light, describing their numerous 'innovations' (*bidaʿa*).[128] Shaykh Ḫalid, himself an advocate of reform among Muslim communities, strongly opposed Wahābī ideas. In Mecca, he met an ʿalīm who advised him not to look for knowledge in the Arabic peninsula but rather to seek knowledge in India.[129] Yet, after his experience in Mecca, he went to Damascus in 1807 and wove a strong relationship with the Kurdish governor Yusuf Genç.

The Wahābī takeover of Mecca and Medina put the governor of Damascus in a difficult situation as his main responsibility was the conduct of the *hajj* caravan. The governor, Yusuf Genç Paşa, thus adopted policies towards Muslims and non-Muslims that betrayed this concern with the Wahābī accusations, and were aimed at showing the adherence of the Damascenes to the Islamic precepts and the restrictions of the *ḏimma.* The Christian chronicler Ibrāhim 'Awra argued that Yusuf Genç's attitude towards non-Muslims and the society in general was influenced by the ideas of his shaykh, which is none other than Shaykh Ḫalid.[130] Indeed, as Yusuf Genç was threatened by the Wahābī takeover, Shaykh Ḫalid helped him to prove that the Wahābī theologians were wrong in their assessment of *Bilād al-Šām* as a place where the *šarīʿa* was not applied. Under his influence, Yusuf Genç demanded public signs of piety. He also tried to make non-Muslims less visible in the public space and restricted their clothing and appearances. According to the chronicler Miḫā'īl al-Dimašqī, he forbade Christians from drinking wine and arak, and ordered that they burn the alcohol they had at home. He then set out to check whether this order had been obeyed by searching houses and ordering the owner to be killed if any alcohol was found.[131] He made regulations so that Muslims and non-Muslims could be distinguished visually. For example,

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[128] al-Ḫānī, *al-Ḥadāʾiq,* 313, 314.
[129] Abd al-Razzāq al- Baytār, *Ḥilyat al-bašar fī tārīḫ al-qarn al-ṯāliṯ ʿašar*, ed. Muḥammad Bahǧa al-Baytār (Damascus : al-Maǧmaʿ al-ʿilmi al-ʿarabi bi Dimašq, 1963), 733.
[130] al-'Awra, *Tārīḫ wilāya,* 94.
[131] al-Dimašqī, *Tārīḫ,* 110.

he forbade Christians from wearing any other color than black.[132] Non-Muslim women could no longer wear embroideries or jewelry in public, not only to distinguish between them and Muslims but also to mark a hierarchy of honor.[133]

Yūsuf Genç also limited non-Muslims' access to public bathes and demanded that the doors of the churches be raised higher so that one did not have to lower his head when entering.[134] He then forbade Christians from raising their voices higher than Muslims. According to Mikhā'īl al-Dimashqī, these restrictions encouraged some Muslims to provoke Christians and mistreat them.[135] For example, a Christian man entered the neighborhood of Bāb Tūmā market to sell wood and was screaming to attract customers. One Muslim man took advantage of this situation and accused him of raising his voice over the Muslims. He was taken to the *naqīb al-ašrāf*, the leader of the *ašrāf*.[136] However, the man pleaded his case and was released although he spoke badly to the *naqīb*.[137] This incongruous accusation points to the influence of rulers' attitude and discourses towards certain groups which are instrumentalized in everyday inter-confessional relationships to get rid of competitors, opponents, or even simply to bother strangers.

Yusuf Genç especially resented the fact that restrictions on the appearance of *ḏimmī* subjects were not respected by Christians of Mount Lebanon, and by inhabitants of the town of Zaḥle in particular. The chronicler Ibrāhīm ʿAwra mentions that Yusuf Genç was adamant that Christians from Ḥaṣbayā and Marjʿayūn who used to come to Damascus had to change their appearance.[138] Another chronicler, Miḫa'īl al-Dimašqī also mentioned an event which

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[132] Ibid, 112.
[133] Ibid, 111.
[134] A popular design in churches and chapels in order to invoke the humility of the worshiper in front of God and in front of representative images. This architecture however was contrary to Islamic teachings which forbids bowing towards representative figures.
[135] Ibid, 112.
[136] Descendants of the prophet, which gave them an honorable possible in society.
[137] al-Dimašqī, *Tārīḫ,* 134.
[138] al-ʿAwra, *Tārīḫ wilāya,* 94

illustrated the governor's attitude.[139] Yusuf Genç had encountered peasants from Zaḥle and Mount Lebanon who were wearing green turbans, a color reserved for Muslims. He asked them what their *maḏhab*[140] was. They answered that they were Christians. He ask them how they dared to take the risk of facing the consequences of breaking the contract of *ḏimma*. They answered that this was how they dressed in the mountain. He thus reprimanded them and gave them the choice to become Muslim as they dressed like Muslims, or be executed. The two Christians from Mount Lebanon converted and returned to Christianity when they went back home. The Christian from Zaḥle however refused. After trying to convince him in vain, he was executed.[141] Yusuf Genç's attitude in this affair also points to the *Tanzimat* objective of homogenizing norms and increasingly imposing urban codes to the countryside, contributing to the process of confessionalization.

Yusuf Genç also adopted strict attitudes towards Muslims who were prohibited to shave their beard or listen to music. He forbade the consumption of sweets, alcohol and tried to curtail the popularity of coffee shops by forcing them to close after sunset.[142] These policies aimed at showing the adherence of Damascenes to Islamic precepts to ward off Wahābī accusations, while paradoxically legitimizing their claims. He also made dietary changes, demanding that Damascenes stop cooking with flour and fat, and that the cooks of serail[143] use only oil, in order to adopt an ascetic lifestyle. He also reduced the meat consumption of the serail and limited himself to thyme and oil some days of the week. Shaykh Ḫalid approved these dietary measures aimed at curbing consumption and adopting an ascetic lifestyle.[144]

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[139] al-Dimašqī, *Tārīḫ,* 117.
[140] Islamic fiqh school : Mālikī, Ḥanafī, Šāfiʿī, Ḥanbalī
[141] al-Dimašqī, *Tārīḫ,* 117.
[142] Grehan, *Everyday Life,* 118, 135, 145.
[143] Governor's palace.
[144] al-Dimašqī, *Tārīḫ,*115.

According to Miḫā'īl al-Dimašqī, Shaykh Ḫalid also told Yusuf Genç that he should not buy his food with the money made illegally. The latter asked what money is legal, to which Shaykh Ḫalid answered: only the money of the *jizya*.[145] Thus Yūsuf Genç immediately increased the amount of the *ǧizya* and collected it from Christians. These policies dissatisfied non-Muslims but also the ulema, and the notables who asked Yusuf Genç to stay away from Shaykh Ḫalid and to overturn these restrictions not grounded in tradition and customs.[146] This example points to the fact that policies adopted towards non-Muslims are part of public demonstration of piety and adherence to Islamic law, and can be used to further governors' popularity or forge alliances. They are embedded in larger narratives regarding morality, political strength and loyalty to the Ottoman State.

The Greek Catholic Abbūd Baḥrī, Yusuf Genc's adviser/money-lender, was also affected by these measures towards Christians. Yūsuf Genç Paşa asked him to become a Muslim to prove his loyalty.[147] The intertwining of religious identity and loyalty points to the politicization of religious identities in this period. According to al-ʿAwra, Shaykh Ḫalid was behind this initiative.[148] Miḫā'īl al-Dimašqī, on the other hand, mentioned that it was Baḥrī's Jewish competitor, Hayyim Fārḥi, who convinced Yūsuf Genç Paşa to demand this conversion.[149] Baḥrī grew worried of this demand and escaped with his brothers to Zaḥle, from where he wrote to the Emir Bašīr Šihāb demanding his protection. His escape deprived the emir of an useful adviser with influence on the Ottoman governor. Upon hearing of Baḥrī's escape, Yūsuf Genç felt regret and published a certificate of safety for him and his family, asking for their return. Emir Bašīr Šihāb agreed to his return. When he came to Damascus, Baḥrī was honored by the Pasha who asked him for forgiveness, presenting his

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[145] Tax paid by non-Muslims in Islamic empires.
[146] al-Dimašqī, *Tārīḫ,*118.
[147] al-Dimašqī, *Tārīḫ,*115; al-ʿAwra, *Tārīḫ wilāya,* 94.
[148] al-ʿAwra,*Tārīḫ wilāya,* 94.
[149] Mikhā'īl Mishāqah, *Murder, Mayhem, Pillage and Plunder : The History of Lebanon in the 18th and 19th Centuries,* trans. W. M. Thackston (Albany: state University of New York Press, 1988), 63.

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demand for conversion as a joke. Yūsuf Genç clothed him in luxurious garments and gave him an even more important position.[150]

Miḫā'īl al-Dimašqī argued that from the time of the publication of restrictions onwards, some Muslim troublemakers started to bother Christians and understood that it was legal for them to kill priests, plunder monasteries, and harass foreigners in the city, such as missionaries. Thus, Christians paid *āġawāt* to protect them and the *qāḍī* threatened the troublemakers with punishment if they continued. Miḫā'īl al-Dimašqī seems to mean that the troublemakers were a specific group taking cohesive actions, however he does not mention their identity or affiliation. The governor also made a public announcement saying that foreigners did not commit any fault and should be left in peace. Seeing that the governor was against them, the intriguers complained about the Christians to the sultan.[151] At that point they found a way to circumvent the threat of punishment by the governor by arguing that there was a destroyed mosque behind the monastery of the missionaries (*dayr al-āfrenğ*), and that they needed to rebuild it. They obtained the authorization to do so and demanded that Christians who lived around the monastery vacate their properties. One of the houses belonged to a Maronite *waqf* so the owner came to complain to the deputy of the *qāḍī*, who put an end to this affair and published an order saying that Christians and Jews have to be treated equality regarding buying, selling and property ownership.[152] These examples show that non-Muslims knew how to use the various decision-makers which made up the provincial administration and could benefit from the protection of the *qāḍī* and government officials in the securing of their rights.

Al-Dimašqi mentions that both Christians and Muslim were desperate because of Yusuf Genç's actions, which departed from the local customs. The ulema thus successfully convinced Yusuf Genç to stop imposing these restrictions and making life difficult for

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[150] al-ʿAwra, *Tārīḫ wilāya,* 95.
[151] al-Dimašqī, *Tārīḫ,* 113.
[152] Ibid, 114.

Damascenes. In this case, they functioned as spokesperson for the Muslim but also non-Muslim population. They probably endorsed this role after being asked to intervene by the non-Muslim elite with whom they shared a social status. They argued that this was against the '*maḏhab*' of Islam. They also pushed him to take his distances from Shaykh Ḫalid and encourage him to leave the city.[153] At that time, Shaykh Ḫalid was not a recognized shaykh and had no patron in Istanbul to support him in front of his opponents. According to the chronicler, the behavior of the governor, and the situation of non-Muslims improved dramatically after his departure.[154]

Shaykh Ḫalid, having lost the support of the governor and following the advice he had received in Mecca, left the city, and set up for India in 1809 where he became the disciple of the Naqšbandī-Mujaddidī shaykh Shah Ghulam Ali Dehlavi.[155] This shaykh had an important political role in the Mughal Empire. The British conquest which had started in 1803 had threatened the role of Naqšbandī shaykhs in the country, and thus pushed Shah Ghulam Ali Dehlavi to champion the opposition to the colonial regime. He saw the British conquest as a threat to the integrity of the *umma* and to the political power of Muslims.[156]

Shah Ghulam Ali was also hostile to Shias for he was involved in a political conflict with British-supported Shia shaykhs of the region of Awadh, who, under the reign of the Nawab leader, engaged in polemical debates with Sunnis shaykhs in the 18th and 19th centuries. Both Shah Ghulam 'Ali and another of Shaykh Ḫalid 's masters in India, Jan-i Janan, had negative attitudes towards Shias and saw them as threat to the unity of Muslims because of their role in British policy.[157] Jan-i Janan was eventually killed by a Shia, which

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[153] al-Dimašqī, *Tārīḫ,* 118.
[154] Ibid, 118.
[155] Otherwide called Abdullah al-Dilawi, d. 1824.
[156] Itzchak Weismann, *The Naqshbandiyya: orthodoxy and activism in a worldwide Sufi tradition,* (London: Routledge, 2007), 66.
[157] Sajida Sultana Alvi, "Sunni Ulama's Discourses on Sh'ism in Northern India during the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries: An Overview," in *Courants et dynamiques chiites à l'époque moderne (XVIIIe-XXe siècles),* ed. Denis Hermann and Sabrina Mervin (Beirut: Orient Institute/Würzburg: Ergon, 2010) 133, 139- 140; Weismann, *The Naqshbandiyya*, 66.

only increased the hostility of the local members of the *ṭarīqa* towards this community.[158] Ghulam Ali also reacted strongly against the syncretism promoted by the Mughal Empire Akbar, and instead pushed for a reform of the ulema and an eradication of innovations.[159]

Shaykh Ḫalid became Shah Ghulam 'Ali's favorite disciple, and he gave him the mission to spread the Naqšbandīya order back home in the Ottoman Empire. He thus returned to Sulaymānīya and began to recruit disciples. He created his own branch: the Naqšbandīya-Ḫalidīyya, named after him. However, he was forced to leave Sulaymānīya because the Baban ruler Mahmud Paşa felt threatened by Ḫalid's popularity among Kurds of the region. Apparently, the shaykhs of *ṭarīqa* Qādirīyya, threatened by his success, also participated in this ousting. He thus moved on to Baghdad, where he was able to get followers from among the Ottoman officers.[160]

Shaykh Ḫalid's teachings incorporated his teacher's attitude towards foreign imperialism and Shias. Similarly to India, the context in the Ottoman Empire was characterized by an increased foreign intervention and loss of sovereignty. This comparison between these two contexts encouraged him to fight the intervention of European powers in the Muslim world in general. He identified the roots of this weakness of the Muslim world in the divisions of the *umma* which led to the abandonment of religious principles.[161]

'Abd al-Razzāq al-Bayṭār, a Damascene, wrote in the biography of Shaykh Ḫalid that he had been threatened by Shias in India because of his involvement in polemical debates. According to the author, he managed to avoid numerous murder attempts.[162] This adversity to Shias marked his teachings and was useful for the Ottoman government in its territorial struggles with the Qajar-ruled Iranian state.

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[158] Abu-Manneh, *Studies on Islam,* 65
[159] Weismann, *The Naqshbandiyya*, 66.
[160] Riedler, "Opposition to the *Tanzimat* state," 35.
[161] Weismann, *Taste of Modernity,* 49.
[162] al- Bayṭār. *Ḥilyat,* 580.

Shaykh Ḫalid returned to Damascus in 1822 with twenty of his deputies, and they were well received by the ulema, unlike ten years earlier.[163] He remained there until his death in 1827. What owed him this warm welcome when he was chased out of the city earlier? While he was unknown when he came to Damascus the first time, Shaykh Ḫalid now benefited from a wide popularity in the city and with governors thanks to his position at the head of the *ṭarīqā*. Then, as mentioned earlier, the Naqšbandīya was increasingly seen in a positive light by the Ottoman government which engaged itself on a reformist direction and saw the potential of the *ṭarīqa* in gaining the loyalty of the Ottoman subjects during these transformations. Shaykh Ḫalid also sent deputies to Istanbul to reinforce his patronage networks with the capital. Many members of the ulema but also bureaucrats and members of the Palace became his deputies and joined the Ḫalidīyya.

Important ulema in Istanbul became disciples of Shaykh Ḫalid. Mustafa ʿAsim Effendi,[164] who was named *Šayḫ al-Islām* over the 1818-1819, 1823-1825, 1833-1846 periods, was a member of the *ṭarīqa* Naqšbandīya-Ḫālidiyya. After the death of Mahmud II, his influence grew within the *maǧlis*. When he held the position of *Šayḫ al-Islām*, there was a symbiosis between the bureaucrats and the ulema, who played an important political role.[165] It is during this period of symbiosis that the Gülhane decree was written.

In addition, even Sultan Abdülmecid himself was influenced by Shaykh Ḫalid. His mentor Mehmet Emin Hafiz Effendi, was introduced to the *ṭarīqa* by a deputy of Shaykh Ḫalid.[166] Once he became Sultan, Abdülmecid named his mentor mufti of the imperial guard.[167] The influence of the *ṭarīqa* upon the sultan is visible in the decrees that he crafted. For example, he reminded the population of the obligation to commit to the five daily

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[163] Weismann, *The Naqshbandiyya,* 88.
[164] Starting his career as a judge, he was named Shaykh al-Islam over three periods in the first part of the 19th century, Abu-Manneh, *The Islamic Roots,* 186.
[165] Ibid, 186, 202.
[166] Ibid, 182-183.
[167] Ibid, 182-183.

prayers.[168] He also made symbolic gestures vis-à-vis the Naqšbandīya-Ḫalidīyya, such as decorating the tomb of Shaykh Ḫalid in Damascus.[169]

The Naqšbandīya-Ḫalidīyya was quite influential in the capital city up until the outbreak of the Crimean war in 1853. Its emphasis on the Sunni identity of the empire, Shaykh Ḫālid's will to emphasized the distinction of Muslims and non-Muslims in the public space as well as the need to reform Muslim's practices contributed to the confessionalization of society in this period. Important decision-makers believed in the idea of reform proposed by the *ṭarīqa* and saw in the application of its precepts a way to unite the empire and find a new strength by operating a return to the Islamic ideal of the just ruler.

In conclusion, the 19th century saw the intensification of religious identities and doctrines amongst all religious communities. It was build upon the long term dynamic of the construction of confessional cultures which started in the 17th century. The Sunni identity of the Ottoman State was emphasized by the *ṭarīqa* Naqšbandīya, which sought to reform the minds and practices of their coreligionists to strengthen the empire and the *umma*. Among Christians and Jews, similar movements of religious reform accompanied the institutionalization of communities, which were accentuated by the Ottoman *Tanzimat* reforms. As a consequence of the internal and state reforms, the cross-cutting cleavages which had existed beforehand and had allowed the individual a certain level of interstitial freedom were challenged. Religion became the main marker of identification among Ottoman subjects. This confessionalization of Ottoman society was accentuated by the nature of international relations and the various foreign threats to the Ottoman State.

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[168] Ibid, 103.
[169] Ibid.

While foreign intervention in the Ottoman Empire in the beginning of the 19th century had favored the rise of a dichotomous vision of Christian and Muslim Ottomans through the politicization of these religious identities, the development of a Christian common consciousness was greatly hindered by conflicts between Catholic and Orthodox denominations. Indeed, due to missionary efforts in the 16th and 17th century, schisms took place in the various Churches of the Ottoman Empire, which were thereby divided between Catholic and Orthodox branches. This chapter will explore the rise of the Greek Catholic Church which was born in the 17th century following a schism with the Greek Orthodox Church. The Greek Catholic *millet* was institutionalized during the Ottoman reforms of the *Tanzimat* after its official recognition by the Ottoman State. While other Catholic communities followed similar patterns of development, this thesis will focus on the case of the Greek Catholics for various reasons.

First, the Greek Catholics were the most numerous in Damascus and its surrounding areas, matched only by the Greek Orthodox. Sources on the Greek Orthodox community in the city, which would make for an interesting comparison with their Catholic counterpart, are not currently available and are not comparable in terms of volume.[1] The amount of sources available on the Greek Catholics, from missionaries, foreign consuls, Ottoman archives and chronicles, in addition to letters sent by local actors to Catholic missionary headquarter, the Congregation of the Propaganda Fide in Rome, is unmatched for other communities.

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[1] These sources have however been accessed by Simon Najm, see "Christian Military Conscription and Badal al'Askariya in Damascus Syria after the *Tanzimat*: The Case of the Orthodox Men Imprisoned and its Consequences (1858-1862)" in *Cercetare Şi Dialog Teologic Astazi,* ed. Viorel Sava, (Iaşi: Doxologia, 2017).

Then, contrary to the Maronites of Mount Lebanon, whose role in the politics of Mount Lebanon has been explored,[2] the history of the Greek Catholic community in the 19th century has yet to be written.[3] This thesis will point to the central role of the Greek Catholics in inter-confessional tensions in Damascus. They were an integral part of Damascene politics yet have not been studied as full-fledged actors of the city's history. The Greek Catholic clergy separated from its Orthodox counterpart in the 17th century. It was then recognized by the Ottoman State in the 19th century. The exploration of the institutionalization of the Greek Catholic community through this period will shed light on the internal transformation of communities before and during the *Tanzimat* reforms. The Greek Catholic clergy had to assemble diffused institutions under one single hierarchical structure and define its distinctiveness vis-à-vis its Orthodox counterpart. At the same time, Greek Catholics had to determine their position in the Catholic world by delineating their communal borders and carving a sphere of independence in relation to the Holy See, missionaries and the Maronite Church. Rival confessional identifications were built simultaneously in juridical, political and theological places, thus leading to a variety of conflicts which entwined these various societal domains.[4] The creation of new *milel*[5] was also a tool for the Ottoman State to build loyalty among its Christian subjects in a context of political secession. This imperative played an important role in the breakaway of the Greek Catholics from the Greek Orthodox in the 19th century.

In this chapter we will explore the early development of the Greek Catholic Church and its institutionalization as an Ottoman *millet* which challenged its relation to its Orthodox

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[2] See Makdisi, *The Culture of Sectarianism* and *Artillery of Heaven.*

[3] For the 18th century see Aurélien Girard, "Le christianisme oriental", for groundwork on the 19th century see Bruce Masters, "The Establishment of the Melkite Catholic *millet* in 1848 and the Politics of Identity in *Tanzimat* Syria," in *Syria and Bilad al-Sham under Ottoman Rule, Essays in honour of Abdul-Karim Rafeq*, ed. Peter Sluglett and Stefan Weber (Leiden: Brill, 2010).

[4] Olivier Christin, "Introduction," in *Les Affrontements religieux en Europe: du début du XVIᵉ au milieu du XVIIᵉ siècle,* ed. Véronique Castagnet, Olivier Christin and Naima Ghermani (Villeneuve d'Ascq: Presses universitaires du Septentrion, 2008), 14.

[5] Plural of *millet.*

counterpart but also to Rome. This chapter will highlight the multifaceted aspect of the creation of the Greek Catholic millet, which had to position itself in regards to various institutions. First, we will explore the birth of the Greek Catholic Church and the development of its institutions before the *Tanzimat* focusing on the central role of monasteries, notables and missionaries. We will highlight the decentralized nature of the Church which allowed individuals a high level of interstitial freedom. Then, we will explore how the Greek Catholic religious leadership advocated for the distinctiveness of their community within the Catholic world and defended the clergy's autonomy in regards to missionaries. This longing for sovereignty over the flock led to a conflictual relationship with Rome. Finally, this chapter will examine the Greek Catholic's separation from the Greek Orthodox patriarch and its attempt to entrench distinctions and separation among the two sects by building a distinctive confessional culture. Foreign intervention on behalf of the two communities further entrenched their division and encouraged the politicization of these religious identities.

1. The Rise of the Greek Catholic Church : a Case of Interstitial Freedom

1.1 Account of the Rise of the Greek Catholic Church: Laity, Monasteries and Latins

The end of the 18th and the beginning of the 19th century in *Bilād al-Šām* saw widespread changes in the political, societal and economic sphere. Inter-confessional relations were affected by the rise of local power holders as well as changes in the balance of power in international politics at the disadvantage of the Ottoman Empire. Amid these changes, Christian communities in Syria were shaken politically, economically, socially and religiously by the rise of Catholic churches, linked to the Roman seat.

In *Bilād al-Šām*, most of the Christians were Arabic-speakers under the authority of the patriarchal See of Antioch, one of the Eastern patriarchates of the Greek Orthodox (*Rum*)

Church represented in Istanbul by the Ecumenical patriarch.[6] There were also Syrian Orthodox, Maronite and Armenian communities. Until the 19th century, only the *Rum* and Armenian patriarchates were recognized by the Ottoman State.[7]

In the 17th and 18th centuries the election of the patriarch of Antioch was a site of communal struggle. The simultaneous election of two rival patriarchs was quite common, however it had not not led to a schism within the Church.[8] Various candidates were often presented by different factions, with conflicting understandings of the election method. Was the patriarch to be chosen by the high clergy, his flock, the lay notables, the previous patriarch, the Ecumenical patriarch or by the Ottoman government? Which city had a say in his election? The rival candidates to the patriarchate often represented the rivalry and power struggles within the church between the clergy members and among notables of important cities.[9]

This dynamic coincided with the increasing activity of Catholic missionaries in the empire in the 17th century. It also took place against the background of the intensification of theological training of Maronites, *Rum* and Syrian clergy members in Rome in the Maronite College or the Urban College, created to form the indigenous clergy under the institution of the Propaganda Fide.[10] This missionary activity however slowed down in the 18th century because of political turmoil in Europe. This period represented the flourishing of Greek, Arab, Armenian and Coptic lay elites in various places of the empire. They obtained important posts in the Ottoman administration and came to play a larger role in church affairs.[11] Since the clergy was not autonomous in regards to economic and political forces, there was always some part of the community which challenged clerical power using various tools, including

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[6] Carsten Walbiner, "The split of the Greek Orthodox patriarchate of Antioch (1724) and the emergence of a new identity in Bilad al-Sham as reflected by some Melkite historians of the 18th and early 20th centuries," *Chronos* 7 (2003): 11.
[7] Masters, "The Establishment," 459.
[8] Walbiner, "The split of the Greek Orthodox," 13.
[9] Ibid, 14.
[10] Heyberger, *Les Chrétiens du Proche-Orient,* 4.
[11] Çolak, *The Orthodox Church,* 111, 139.

the Ottoman power structure, to do so.[12] Governors or local power holders would often take sides in these internal rivalries, to further their own influence or simply to obtain bribes.[13] Ambitious bishops created political alliances with governors or emirs to increase their mutual power. Indeed, bishopric's borders often shifted with provincial lines.[14]

With the Ottoman conquest of Syria and Egypt in the 16th century, the *Rum* Ecumenical patriarch of Constantinople became more involved in the affairs of the Eastern patriarchates of Jerusalem and Alexandria, and later in the patriarchate of Antioch, naming Greek-speaking bishops to the positions of patriarchs.[15] The threat of Roman Catholic influence encouraged him to seek the help of the Ottoman authorities to increase his control over the *Rum* in the seat of Antioch. Outside intervention in the elections of the clergy, from the Ecumenical patriarch in Constantinople, the Holy See, missionaries, religious orders, and foreign consuls dramatized the existing factionalism, leading to a schism within the *Rum* church with the double election of two patriarchs in 1724, an Orthodox one recognized by the Ottoman government and a Catholic one recognized by the Pope.[16] This double election marked the definitive schism within the *Rum* church, with Silfāstrūs being the Greek Orthodox patriarch chosen by the central state and the Patriarch of Constantinople and Sarufīm being the Greek Catholic patriarch recognized by Rome.

However, both communities did not benefit from the same status within the Ottoman Empire as the Greek Catholics were not recognized by the government. In practice, it means that they did not have access to the same resources and were in a position of weakness in

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[12] Aurelien Girard, "Nihil esse innovandum ? Maintien des rites orientaux et négociation de l'union des Églises orientales avec Rome (fin XVIe – mi-XVIIIe s)," in *Réduire le schisme ? Ecclésiologies et politiques de l'Union entre Orient et Occident, XIIIe XVIIIe siècles*, ed. Marie-Hélène Blanchet and Frédéric Gabriel (Paris: Centre d'Histoire et Civilisation de Byzance, 2013), 129.

[13] Ibid, 118.

[14] Philipp, *The Syrians in Egypt,* 13.

[15] Girard, "Le christianisme oriental", 639; Çolak, *The Orthodox Church,* 140; Masters, "The Establishment", 458, 469.

[16] Heyberger*, Les Chrétiens du Proche-Orient*, 85, 120; Walbiner, "The Split of the Greek Orthodox," 12, 172; Girard, "Le christianisme oriental," 617; Cyrille Charon, "L'Église grecque melchite catholique (Suite.) » *Échos d'Orient* 6, no.39 (1903) : 114.

regards to the Orthodox patriarch. They thus lived through periods of leniency and persecution, depending on the interests of the governor, various alliances and power relationships in the provinces. Numerous Greek Catholics left the cities to take refuge in Mount Lebanon, Egypt, Istanbul, Leghorn, and Marseille. This departure was also motivated by commercial or economic opportunities abroad. The community was thereby dispersed in the empire and across the Mediterranean. They developed international networks in Europe and across the empire which allowed them to enjoy some level of influence over the community.[17]

Yet, while the Greek Orthodox had the backing of the government, Greek Catholics had their own power base. The presence of various Greek Catholics in the entourage and administration of local power holders and in international commerce, gave them a strong influence in some cities, such as Acre, Damascus, Sidon, and in Mount Lebanon.[18] This local influence allowed them to counter the attacks of the Greek Orthodox patriarchs.[19] However, because of their lack of official status, they had to pray in Orthodox churches and remit their taxes to the Orthodox prelates, at least in the cities where the Orthodox patriarch's authority could easily be enforced. When they refused they could be accused of rebellion. They could not officially have their own churches. This situation encouraged Catholics to pray in the Latin churches or with Maronites, a solution which at that time provided a safe haven to Greek Catholics.[20]

In Mount Lebanon and remote places, thanks to the Greek Catholics' relationship with local power holders, they obtained the ownership of places of worship, especially monasteries. The monasteries were divided between the Greek Orthodox and the Greek Catholics in the

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[17] Coller, *Arab France,* 38, 90. Heyberger, *Chrétiens du Proche-Orient*, 37.

[18] Thomas Philipp, *Acre : the rise and fall of a Palestinian city, 1730-1831* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001), 117.

[19] Mishāqah, *Murder, Mayhem,* 117; Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivleri, hereafter BOA, C.ADL.93/55.94, February 2nd 1785; A.E., 166/PO, Serie D/20, vol. 1, Letter of the superiors of the Capucin Rousset and de Rennes-French Ambassador, August 12th 1782.

[20] Heyberger, *Chrétiens du Proche Orient*, 358, 400.

18th century based upon the size of the community but also their relative power and the influence of the *mukataacılar*.[21] However, the emirs also intervened to favour those who promised more taxes, or gave a bigger bribe.[22] The division was not conducted peacefully however, and conflicts between monasteries took place.[23] In Damascus the closest stakes were the monasteries and churches of Ṣaydnāyā and Maʿlūlā, a few hours from the city. These churches often changed hands at the end of the 18th century, depending on the power balance between the Greek Orthodox patriarch and the Greek Catholic priests.[24] The division of taxes between the two communities was also a thorny question and depended on the power balance in the various cities.[25]

In the 18th century the monasteries and religious orders gained in importance. New Greek Catholic religious orders such as the Chouerites and Salvadorians were created in this period and organized along the European monastic model, with the help of Jesuits. They were structured on a top-down level, with superiors named at their head.[26] The Greek Catholic monasteries were situated in Mount Lebanon and the coast. They formed the majority of the clergy and provided an economic and political link with the laity. Bishops were often away from their seat, thus delegating power to those left behind, mainly monastic 'missionaries'.[27] Greek Catholics were often attended to by monks rather than secular priests.[28]

Monasteries were the beneficiaries of most of the endowed *waqf* of the community. They had lay patrons who funded the monasteries, ensuring them a level of influence over these institutions. Notables often sent their sons and daughters to the monasteries to enter religious orders. Monasteries also relied on lay representatives who were in a position to

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[21] Tax-farmers in Ottoman Empire, in a tributary relationship to the state.
[22] Souad Slim, *The Greek Orthodox Waqf in Lebanon during the Ottoman period* (Beirut: Orient Institut Beirut, 2007), 101
[23] Ibid, 102.
[24] al-Dimašqī, *Tārīḫ*, 73.
[25] A.E., 166/PO, Serie D/20, vol. 1, Letter of the superiors of the Capucin Rousset and de Rennes-French Ambassador, August 12th 1782.
[26] Heyberger, *Chrétiens du Proche-Orient,* 434.
[27] Ibid, 400.
[28] Not originating from a religious order contrary to regular priests; Ibid, 442-444.

advocate for the community in front of temporal powers and counter efforts at dispossession from the part of the Greek Orthodox clergy.[29] The exercise of jurisdiction over the monasteries was a crucial tool in struggles within the Church, but also in the civil realm.

The laity played an important role in the local affairs thanks to their employment by the governors and local power holders as advisers, money-lenders, and scribes. Greek Catholic elites were concentrated in the main cities of *Bilād al-Šām* and Egypt. Their relation with power holders allowed them to obtain authorizations for the construction of churches, monasteries and bishop's residences. This central role also ensured that they had a say in the elections and choice of bishops, monastery superiors, priests and even patriarchs.[30] The support of a wealthy merchant could help tilt the balance of power in favor of a candidate to these positions of power. They demanded from monasteries to be sent specific monks as priests or sent back the ones they deemed unfit.[31] In the absence of a strong secular clergy in the main cities of *Bilād al-Šām*, the lay elite became accustomed of taking care and maintaining all the community institutions, together with monks and missionaries. The bishops and patriarchs were also chosen from among these important families.[32]

Then, in addition to monks and notables, Latin missionaries installed in their convents were also involved in the life of Greek Catholics in the cities of *Bilād al-Šām*, such as Damascus, in the absence of a bishop or high clergy who tended to reside in Mount Lebanon. Missionaries confessed the flock and attended to their daily needs.[33] In times of threat, local Christians were quick to demand the protection of Latin missionaries over their church and properties to avoid dispossession.[34]

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[29] Slim, *The Greek Orthodox Waqf*, 74, 92.
[30] See for example the Ṣayfī family in Heyberger, *Les Chrétiens du Proche-Orient*, 119-126.
[31] For example, Alepine notables refused to obey their bishop when he imposed priests on them. They thought that they had the right to chose them, Archives of the "Sacra Congregatio de Propaganda Fide" (S.C.P.F), Serie "Scritture riferite nelle congregazioni generali" (S.C.) First Serie : Letters which reached the Dicastery of Missionary Lands : Greeks Melkites 1682-1862, vol. 17, p. 18, Qattan, February 1rst 1830.
[32] Heyberger, *Les Chrétiens du Proche-Orient*, 119-126.
[33] Ibid, 358.
[34] *S.C.P.F, (S.C) Greci Melchiti,* vol. 21, p. 364, Clemente bishop of Akka, October 25th 1843.

This diffused leadership structure put monasteries and missionaries at the center of the daily lives of Greek Catholics, and tended to sideline bishops. Yet, this was not an issue for bishops and patriarch who themselves came from the monastic orders, and exercised their authority through cherishing their links with them.[35] In a word, the different elements forming the Greek Catholic community were each tied in some way or another to the monastic orders. They shared different layers of property and had stakes in maintaining the strength of this institution.

The main power struggle in the period was not between the clergy and the laity, but rather among different monastic orders, who bid each other for influence over the high clergy and patriarchate and over the property of funds. The two main Greek Catholic orders, the Chouerites and Salvatorians monks were engaged in such a competition.[36] The division between the Chouerites and the Salvatorians was geographically marked.[37] Sidon and the South of Lebanon were linked to the Salvatorians through the monastery of Dayr al-Muḫallaṣ funded by the bishop of Sidon Aftīmyūs Ṣayfī.[38] This area was dominated by Druze shaykhs. Most of the Chouerite monasteries surrounded Beirut, and many were established in the districts were under the Maronite *kaymakam* in the 19th century. The two orders lived in different geographical and political contexts.[39]

Monasteries were not isolated in Mount Lebanon but rather fully involved in its power networks. Their situation depended on the political balance of power. When ruling families such as the Šihāb of the Ḥarfūš were entangled in succession wars, monks knew their possessions could be subjected to plunder. When the political situation was stable, their

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[35] Girard, "Le christianisme oriental," 657.
[36] Heyberger, *Chrétiens du Proche-Orient*, 445.
[37] Charles de Clercq, *Histoire des conciles d'après les documents originaux*, Tome XI, vol. 2 (Paris : Librarie Letouzey et Ané, 1949), 429.
[38] Heyberger, Chrétiens du Proche-Orient, 121.
[39] See Paul Bacel, "La Congrégation des Basiliens Chouérites" in *Échos d'Orient,* tome 6, no.41 (1903): 242-248; Joseph Chammas, *The Melkite Church,* trans. Christina Schmalenbach, ed. Lutfi Laham (Jerusalem, Emrezian 1992)*,* 134-136.

relationship with emirs allowed them to prosper, and they could obtain justice and favors under their protection.[40]

The Greek Catholic monasteries multiplied in the 18th century.[41] As a result of the political context, changes in the taxation system and the increasing trade with Europe,[42] the monasteries increasingly acquired land, changing monastic life as they adapted to the needs of cultivation and production. With the boom of silk trade in the 18th century, monasteries engaged in inter-sancak and international trade and employed numerous farmers and peasants. They became economic centers on which depended the prosperity of the surrounding peasantry.[43] The multiplication of monasteries in the 18th century was accompanied by an increasing reliance on emirs rather than on the lay elite.[44] Monasteries thus became major political and economic centers in the late 18th century.

1.2 Overlapping Institutions and Norms

The overlapping of institutions that formed the Greek Catholic Church and its diffuse structure awarded individuals a certain level of interstitial freedom. The blurry borders between Christian communities allowed for legal pluralism and the coexistence of various norms which offered Greek Catholics a large choice in their religious practice and the expression of their faith.

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[40] Ibid, 39.

[41] Ibid, 6, 9, 10, 12. Waqf foundations became more numerous in this period, see Slim, *The Greek Orthodox Waqf,* 38, 77; For extended studies on the Christian waqf in the region see Sabine Saliba, *Les fondations pieuses waqfs chez les chrétiens et les juifs. Du moyen Âge à nos jours,* Paris, Geuthner, 2016; Richard van Leeuwen, *Notables and clergy in Mount Lebanon: The Khâzin Sheikhs and the Maronite Church (1736-1840)* (Leiden, New-York, Köln: Brill, 1994); Musa Sroor, *Fondations pieuses en mouvement. De la transformation des statuts de propriété des biens waqfs à Jérusalem 1858-1917 (*Aix-en- Provence : IREMAM and IFPO, 2010).

[42] See the role of monasteries among Maronites in Sabine Saliba, *Les monastères maronites doubles du Liban. Entre Rome et l'Empire ottoman (XVII*e*-XIX*e*siècles)* (Paris, Geuthner et Kaslik / Presses de l'Université Saint-Esprit,2008) and in Bernard Heyberger, *Hindiyya. Mystique et criminelle, 1720-1798* (Paris, Aubier, 2001).

[43] Slim, *The Greek Orthodox Waqf*, 100; Also see Souad Slim, *Le Métayage et I'impot au Mont-Liban XVIlIe et XIXe siècles* (Beirut: El-Machreq, 1993).

[44] Slim, *The Greek Orthodox Waqf*, 95.

In the archives of the Sacred Congregation of Propaganda Fide lays an unusual love story which takes us across the Mediterranean and embodies this type of interstitial freedom.[45] It narrates the affair between a priest and a married woman in which all the societal actors of Ottoman Christians' daily lives, the bishop, the apostolic delegate, the mufti, the patriarch, the governor, the Holy See, notables and monasteries, were all involved. Characterizing it as a love story might not do justice to the actors of this adventure, it might rather be described as an Ottoman adventure through the system of religious identity, legal pluralism and political ambitions, which underlines the journey of the key protagonists through Syria, Mount Lebanon, Egypt and Rome.[46]

A priest called Elīyās officiated the church Mār Elīyās in Mount Lebanon. However, not content with being limited to his small parish, he left his district and moved to Damascus in the early 1830's. A large and rich city like Damascus could surely offer more hopes of comfort and sources of wealth than his small parish. He managed to reside at the house of an aged woman, to which he read the mass everyday.

Elīyās was not the only priest residing out of his bishopric, but his presence in Damascus was particularly problematic because the woman in question lived with her daughter in law, Rosa, the daughter of Ḥannā Baḥrī, the advisor of the governor of Damascus under the Egyptian rule. As such, she benefited from a respected status, and the fact that Elīyās was celebrating a mass in her house attracted other individuals who came to receive the sacraments, and who gave him their alms, a precious source of revenue for priests. The patriarch Maksīmus Maẓlūm ordered Elīyās to leave this house and return to his parish, under the threat of suspension, but he did not pay much case to this warning and continued to officiate in the house. The patriarch called upon the superior of the Franciscan Terra Santa,

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[45]*S.C.P.F, (S.C) Greci Melchiti,* Vol. 18, p. 235, Villardel, 1834.
[46] Heyberger, *Chrétiens du Proche-Orient*, 76; Similar stories can be found in Cesare Santus, *Trasgressioni necessarie : communicatio in sacris, coesistenza e conflitti tra le comunità cristiane orientali (Levante e Impero ottomano, XVII-XVIII secolo)* (Rome: École française de Rome, 2019).

Francisco Villardel, to force him to leave, but to no avail. While this affair unraveled, Elīyās was spending his time teaching the young Rosa the art of reading. He was also her confessor, to whom she disclosed her sins and asked for absolution. His service seemed a bit too dedicated to some of the notables, especially his father, the well respected Ḥannā Baḥrī. Rosa's Muslim neighbors noticed something unusual about the priest's constant presence in her house and forbade Elīyās to come to their street. The Greek Catholic notables also became suspicious of some unholy behavior and threatened him of dire consequences if he did not leave right away. Where the orders of the patriarch, his vicar and the Franciscan superior of Terra Santa failed in scaring away Elīyās, the antagonism of the notables succeeded.

Elīyās thus left Damascus, but not alone. Rosa had decided to leave her husband, Yūḥannā Sinağī, and ran away with the priest to Zaḥle. Arriving in Zaḥle, which they hoped would be a safe haven, they met with the antagonism of the bishop, warned by the patriarch about their scandalous behavior. With no place to go, Elīyās and Rosa came back to Damascus. How could they escape the authority of the patriarch and the notables? They had to find a much stronger protector, the only option was to turn to the government and conversion to Islam was the only way to obtain immunity. The ceremony of conversion was conducted by the mufti right away.[47] They were then united in marriage. The news of this conversion spread to the city, scandalizing Catholics, but causing jubilation on the part of the Greek Orthodox, who blamed the Catholics' preference for unmarried priests for the whole affair.[48]

However, the couple apparently expected a larger subsidy from the mufti which did not materialize.[49] They were living in a miserable house and to get out of this bad economic situation, they called upon the Franciscan Superior of Terra Santa, Villardel. They confessed to him their sins and expressed the wish to return to Christianity. He thought that if he could

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[47] *S.C.P.F, (S.C) Greci Melchiti,* Vol. 18, p. 235, Villardel, 1834.
[48] Ibid,
[49] *S.C.P.F, (S.C) Greci Melchiti,* Vol. 18, p. 235, Villardel, 1834.

facilitate the apostate couple's escape, he could win back their soul. However, Elīyās signified to the superior of Terra Santa that he could not leave the city because of the heavy debts he had contracted. Villardel sacrificed himself to bring them back into the Christian realm by paying himself Elīyās' debts and arranged for the escape of the couple to Cairo under the pretense of a commercial venture, to let them stay there long enough to make themselves forgotten and in return in some months. In this manner, they would not be considered as fugitives. Rosa and Elīyās agreed and set out to Cairo. However, they did not stay in Cairo but instead embarked on a boat to Rome, against the advice of the Franciscan Villardel.[50]

In the meanwhile, Rosa's husband Yūḥannā thought that it was time for him to remarry, given that his wife had had public extra-conjugal relationship, had changed religion, got married again and lived in a different continent. However, Villardel did not judge these reasons strong enough to justify to break the insolvable nature of the link of marriage. Yūḥannā had to remain married to Rosa. Unsurprisingly, he was not satisfied by the idea. Frustrated by his failure to remarry a Catholic wife, he turned to the Greek Orthodox patriarch and demanded to enter the Church and marry a Greek Orthodox. This demand was accepted right away because Greek Orthodox consider apostasy as death. He was thus allowed to remarry just as widowers were. Yet, Giovanni's attachment to the Greek Orthodox Church did not seem very strong, for he soon returned to attend the Greek Catholic service. Seeing him there, Villardel warned him that he was living an unlawful union and could not receive the sacraments in this state. Giovanni was not moved by this threat and continued to attend the church and received the sacraments. While he was committing a sin in the view of the Church cannons, his action was not reprehensible according to local customs, where marriage among

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[50] Ibid, Vol. 18, p. 235, Villardel, 1834.

Christian communities were common.[51] It allowed him to maintain his reputation among his peers and continue attending his own church.[52]

Villardel, unhappy about this turn of events, and his inability to put an end to this situation, thought that if he could bring back Rosa, she could return to her husband, who would leave his current Orthodox wife. That this entailed two divorces did not seem to bother Villardel, who only considered the first catholic marriage as legitimate according to canon law.[53] Meanwhile, in Rome, Rosa managed to obtain the protection of the Pope by entering the hospice of the beggars.[54]

A year after her arrival to Rome, Rosa wrote to her husband asking if he would take her back. Surprisingly, he accepted.[55] In the meanwhile, a new patriarch had been elected, which gave her the opportunity to present herself through a new light. Now she had to justify her return to Damascus to the Propaganda. She thus wrote to the secretary of the Propaganda Fide, narrating an interesting version of her life story, which she knew would fit into the existing expectations about the Ottoman Empire. According to her letter, she was living peacefully in Damascus with her husband, when the governor captured her and tried to force her to become Muslim and to marry one of his sons. At that point, entered the character of Elīyās, her confessor, who braved all the dangers and saved her from the claws of the governor to get her into safety in Rome. Now Elīyās was returning to his hometown after a year of dedicated service to ensure her safety, and she asked to be allowed to return with him. She asked to be spared the danger of returning to Damascus, where the governor would resume his persecution, neither to Mount Lebanon where her brother Yūsuf who became a

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[51] The Greek Catholic synods repeatedly forbade marriage to non-Catholics, which demonstrate that it was a common occurrence, de Clercq, *Histoire des conciles*, 350.
[52] Ibid, vol. 18, p. 235, Villardel, 1834.
[53] Ibid, vol. 18, p. 235, Villardel, January 15th 1834.
[54] Ibid, vol. 18, p. 265, Rosa Arabe, 1834.
[55] Ibid, vol. 18, p. 262, Giovani Sinadji-Rosa Araba, March 11th 1834.

Muslim could help the governor find her. She rather asked to be able to go to Cairo where her husband would join her.[56]

Elīyās however returned to Cairo alone because Rosa set out to Mount Lebanon. Elīyās sought to return to priesthood and was well received by the Franciscans, and even resided in their convents. However, his story had not completely been forgotten by the vicar of the new patriarch, who prevented him from celebrating the masses in the city. Elīyās complained about the vicar directly to the Propaganda.[57] In 1835, Rosa arrived in Mount Lebanon and was soon joined by her former husband having divorced his Greek Orthodox wife.[58]

The story of Elīyās and Rosa, beyond its amusing aspects points to the way local Christians used the multiplicity of possible sources of authorities to navigate between various jurisdictions and thus escape the increasing authority of the patriarchs and bishops. It also points to the instrumentalization of discourses of persecution by the Ottoman government in order to obtain resources in Europe. Then, conversion was used to escape authority, to obtain access, but it did not represent a final choice. This level of interstitial freedom enjoyed by Christians was challenged by the institutionalization of the Greek Catholic church under the patriarch Maximūs Maẓlūm.

2. **Separation of the Greek Catholic Church: Finding its Place in the Catholic world**

The Greek Catholic Church separated from the Greek Orthodox and started to build its institutions. At the same time, this transformation of the Greek Catholic Church implied a necessity to determine its position in regards to Rome. What level of autonomy in the decision-making process should the patriarchs have in regards to the Pope? What were the

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[56] Ibid, vol. 18, p. 265, Rosa Araba, 1834.
[57] Ibid, vol. 18, p. 321, Elia Marhawi, December 12th 1834.
[58] *Archivio Segreto Vaticano (ASV)*, Delegazione apostolica nel Libano, Correspondance with patriarchs, political leaders, priests, vol. 76, letter no.7, Auvergne-Mazlum, July 24th 1835.

limits of the missionaries and apostolic delegates' interventions in the affairs of the Church? Who had the ultimate say in the election of bishops, patriarchs and other members of the clergy?

This reconsideration of the relation to Rome was accompanied by a need to clearly establish the hierarchy of the Greek Catholic Church, especially the relative authority and jurisdiction of the bishops and patriarchs. The councils that took place from 1806 to 1860 were underlined by the question of the relation between the patriarch and the bishops, between the latter and the congregation superiors and between the patriarch and the Pope.[59]

The council of Qarqafa 1806 led by the bishop of Aleppo Ǧarmānūs Ādam and the patriarch Āġābīūs II Maṭar had attempted to regulate the relation between the different levels of the hierarchy. The council followed the model of the synod of Pistoia, which supported Gallican ideas. It rendered Ǧarmānūs Ādam suspect in the eyes of the Propaganda Fide.[60] Gallicanism, as developed in France, supported the autonomy of the organization of the French church, but left the spiritual authority to the Pope. This ideology attempted to limit the intervention of the Pope in the organization of the church thus privileging the councils, the authority of the bishop in his jurisdiction and the authority of the government on his territory. Gallicanism has a long history in the church, but it took a more official form with the writings of Bossuet in the 17th century. Since the 18th century, French episcopal Gallicanism was a reaction against Richerist and Presbyterian movements within the constitutional church. After the French revolution, the Gallican church was constituted with a civil constitution of the clergy. However, in 1801 Napoleon restored the superiority of the Pope through the Concordat. Yet, the regulations of the Concordat in 1802 were underlined by this episcopal Gallicanism, for it gave the bishop a central role as an intermediary between the political power and the inhabitants of the bishopric. The bishop was also given the full jurisdiction

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[59] de Clercq, *Histoire des conciles*, 353
[60] Girard,"Le christianisme oriental," 678.

over his bishopric and was alone to appoint and dismiss priests. This authority given to the bishops met with opposition from the low clergy against this episcopal form of authoritarianism.[61]

In the council of Qarqafa which took place a few years the synod of Pistoia, the bishop of Aleppo, Ādam, introduced the ideas of episcopal and parochial authority in the Greek Catholic church.[62] On the one hand, the patriarch was prevented from intervening in the administration of the bishopric.[63] On the other hand, the council also sought to repel the influence of missionaries into the local churches. Ādam promoted a more independent role for the patriarchs vis à vis the Pope in regards to elections and decision-making process.[64] The autonomy of both the bishop and the patriarch were simultaneously strengthened.

Rome saw as a dangerous possibility that Ādam could spread these Gallican ideas in the Ottoman Empire. In addition to these larger contemporary political concerns, missionaries such as the Lazarists and the Franciscans saw in the ideas of Ğarmānūs Ādam a threat to their jurisdiction over Greek Catholics, they thus strongly opposed him and denounced him to the Holy See. In the end, the writings of Ğarmānūs Ādam were condemned in 1812 by the Congregation of the Propaganda Fide. His works were forbidden in 1816.[65] The acts of the synods of Qarqafa were annulled in 1835.

The relation of the high clergy and Rome proved conflictual through the first part of the 19th century. It was especially highlighted in the case of contested elections. Ādam had sought to regulate the conduct of elections in the council of Qarqafa. This council authorized

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[61] Séverine Blenner-Michel, "L'autorité épiscopale dans la France du XIXe siècle," *Histoire@Politique. Politique, culture, société*, no. 18 (September-December 2012): 63-65.
[62] Heyberger, *Hindiyya,* 214.
[63] De Clercq, *Histoire des conciles*, 353
[64] Charles A. Frazee, *Catholics and Sultans: The Church and the Ottoman Empire 1453–1923 (*Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 206.
[65] On the accusations of jansenism and gallicanism see Aurelien Girard, "Le jansénisme et le gallicanisme sont-ils des « articles d'exportation » ? Jalons pour une recherche sur le parcours et la doctrine de Ğirmānūs Ādam, archevêque grec-catholique d'Alep au tournant des XVIIIᵉ et XIXᵉ siècles," in *Église, Mémoire(s), Éducation, Mélanges offerts à Jean-François Boulanger,* eds. Véronique Beaulande-Barraud et Benoît Roux (Reims: Editions et presses universitaires de Reims, 2014).

two ways to elect a bishop. The first would be to regroup the priests and eventually the notables of a bishopric and to let them chose a bishop by at least full majority. If majority could not be reached, the patriarch was to choose the candidate. This method was only applied in Aleppo. The second method would be to let the patriarch choose three candidates, present them to the clergy and the notables, who were then to select one. If they were unable to do so, the patriarch himself would make the final decision.[66] This method, applied in all the other bishoprics gave a increasing power to the patriarch, especially since internal conflicts often prevented the bishops from reaching an agreement. However, it was already an improvement from the synod of Saint Savior in 1790 which stated that the patriarch could propose a single candidate. In 1849 it was instructed that the Patriarch had to consult with the bishops to choose the candidates that he was to present.[67] We can thus observe a transition towards more consultation of the bishops in the election process.

It should be noted that none of the councils mentioned that the Holy See was to have a say in these elections. Yet, according to Rome, this was an unalienable right of the Pope.[68] Through the apostolic delegate, the Propaganda Fide attempted to push for the appointments of certain bishops over others. These conflicting conceptions of the role of the Pope became apparent with the election of Maksīmūs Maẓlūm, Ğarmānūs Ādam's protégé, to the position of bishop of Aleppo in 1810. At the death of Ğarmānūs Ādam, the patriarch Agapios II Maṭar called for the election of the bishop of Aleppo, to which only seven bishops answered. Four or five other bishops did not come to the election. Maẓlūm was elected bishop by six voices over seven.[69] However, his election was challenged by the opponents of Ğarmānūs Ādam, because

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[66] De Clercq, *Histoire des conciles*, 351-352.
[67] Ibid, 419.
[68] Verdeil, *La mission jésuite*, 60-62.
[69] De Clercq, *Histoire des conciles*, 363.

he had been under his wing and was his secretary during the council of Qarqafa.[70] The opposition was composed of many priests of the city, some notables such as Ḥannā Aǧǧūrī, the bishop of Beirut Āǧnāṭīūs Ṡarrūf and the missionaries, especially the Lazarists.[71] The opponents appealed to Rome to contest this election. However the affair was not dealt with right away because the Pope was imprisoned in Fontainebleau. Finally, in 1811, Maẓlūm was suspended and left for Rome the same year.[72] His election was invalidated by Rome in 1815.[73] However, as a compensation he received the title *in partibus infidelium*[74] of bishop of Myra, without any territorial jurisdiction.[75] He stayed in Europe several years, hoping for the situation to change in his favor.

While he was in Rome, the situation of Greek Catholics in *Bilād al-Šām* changed dramatically. In the beginning of the 19th century, Greek Catholics had benefited from the support of French consuls in cities, which had allowed them to escape the authority of Greek Orthodox patriarchs. However, with the French Bourbon Restoration following the defeat of Napoleon at Waterloo in 1815 and the downfall of the French Empire, France lost influence and prestige, and its consuls were consequently less able to defend Greek Catholics from the Greek Orthodox in the Ottoman Empire.[76] The situation of Catholics in the Empire was threatened following these events.[77] Armenian Catholics in Istanbul suffered a setback when the Armenian administrators in charge of the imperial mint were killed by the Grand Vizier.

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[70] Hanna Kildani, *Modern Christianity in the Holy Land: Development of the Structure of Churches and the Growth of Christian Institutions in Jordan and Palestine; the Jerusalem patriarchate, in the Nineteenth Century, in Light of the Ottoman fermans and the international relations of the Ottoman Sultanate*, trans. George Musleh (Bloomington: AuthorHouse, 2010), 645.

[71] Joseph Hajjar, *Un lutteur infatigable, le patriarche Maxime Mazloum* (Harissa: Imprimerie Saint-Paul, 1957), 28-30.

[72] De Clercq, *Histoire des conciles*, 358.

[73] Hajjar, *Un lutteur infatigable,* 188.

[74] A bishopric that no longer exists

[75] De Clercq, *Histoire des conciles*, 371.

[76] Ian Coller, *Arab France*, 130.

[77] Heyberger, *Hindiyya*, 285.

The official justification was that they were targeted for having clandestine private chapels in their houses, yet it is most probable that they were killed to avoid the repayment of debts.[78]

In 1818, in Aleppo, which was dependent on the patriarchate of Constantinople, the Orthodox metropolitan Gīrāsīmūs demanded the application of the sultanic order addressed to the governor Ḫūršīd Pasha, at the request of the patriarch of Constantinople.[79] It condemned the rebellion of some Greek Catholic priests in Aleppo, who forbade their flock to attend the *Rum* Churches and encouraged them to enter the "Frank and Catholic" sect. The order demanded the exile of these priests, the surrender of the churches, and to forbid the Catholic and Latin priests from entering *Rum* Orthodox's houses. This document, designating the Greek Catholic priests as rebels or *müfsidler*,[80] endorsed the narrative of the Greek Orthodox, who presented the Greek Catholics as illegitimate rebels against the authority of the patriarch, not as a different sect. The use of the *fesad* (rebellion) category makes an analogy with the act of rebellion against the government.[81] Two months later, Ḫūršīd Pasha sent a report to the government mentioning that the accused priests responded with rebellion, protested in front of the governor's office, and attacked the house of Gīrāsīmūs. Eleven of them were arrested and executed by the governor.[82]

Then, in 1820, Zakariyā, the Greek Orthodox Bishop of ʿAkkār near Tripoli, came to Damascus and with the help of his patriarch demanded the application of the same order. They complained of the rebellion of the Greek Catholics, their lack of obedience towards their patriarch and their joining the Church of the Franks. They denied that they constituted a different church, by arguing that they just joined the Franks' sect, Catholicism. They

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[78] Frazee, *Catholics and the Sultan,* 256-257.
[79] Yūsuf Ǧ. Warda, Al-*Šuhub al-Ṣubḥiya fi al-Kanīsa al-Masīḥiya*. Cairo: Al-ṭabʿa al-ʿumūmiya, 1901), 141. I would like to thank my colleague Diane Kahale for finding this work.
[80] Corrupters, rebels.
[81] BOA, C.ADL.70.4180, February 27th 1818.
[82] BOA, HAT 774/36303, April 4th 1818.

demanded that all churches and *waqf*[83] used by the Catholics be returned to their rightful owner, the Greek Orthodox patriarch.[84]

The provincial administration of Damascus had beforehand been in the hands of local power-holders, with strong links to local factions. These local power holders had used the service the Greek Catholic scribes and advisers. However, from 1812 onwards, the governor of Damascus was usually an outsider sent from Istanbul and did not stay long enough to build his own power base.[85] This administrative change favoured the Greek Orthodox. After meeting in the governor's office to judge the behavior of the Greek Catholics, the Greek Orthodox patriarch accused them of throwing stones at him with the intent to kill him.[86] In consequence, some Greek Catholic notables were jailed and tortured, even after they agreed to pay a ransom.[87] Numerous Greek Catholic priests were arrested and exiled to the Arwād Island.[88] The Greek Orthodox Bishop of ʿAkkār, Zakariyā also attempted to obtain the ownership of the church of Sidon, claimed by the Greek Catholics. However, he was unable to do so because of the influence of Greek Catholics on the governor.[89] Some members of the community went to Zaḥle in Mount Lebanon, to the convents of the coast, while others fled to Egypt.

This ill-treatment of the Catholics by the Greek Orthodox patriarch gave Maẓlūm an opportunity to increase his influence and collect funds. It gave him a cause to support, bringing him to various places in Europe (Vienna) and to Istanbul.[90] In these travels he represented a persecuted community in need for the support of foreign powers. His travels were financed by the Holy See.[91] At that point, Maẓlūm was even given a recommendation

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[83] Inalienable endowments.
[84] Warda, *Al Šuhub,* 145.
[85] Dick Douwes, *The Ottomans in Syria, A History of Justice and Oppression* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2000), 58.
[86] Warda, A*s-Šuhub,* 147.
[87] Ibid, 146.
[88] Mishāqah, *Murder, Maheym,* 117.
[89] al-ʿAwra, *Tārīḫ wilāyā*, 451.
[90] *S.C.P.F, (S.C) Greci Melchiti,* vol. 12, p. 621, Mazloum, July 21st 1818.
[91] Ibid, vol. 12, p. 625, Carlo di Masse, August 28th 1818.

by the patriarch and was mentioned as the bishop of Aleppo by the patriarch.[92] His endeavors were quite successful as he obtained a letter of recommendation from the Austrian statesman Klemens Wenzel von Metternich.[93] Maẓlūm emerged as the champion of the cause of Oriental Catholics in Europe.

At the same time, Maẓlūm travelled to Marseille, where he managed to obtain enough funds and endeavored to start the construction of a church for the Greek Catholic community in the city, the church of Saint Nicolas of Myra, which added to his popularity.[94]

A year later, in 1821, the Greek Uprising of Morea took place, leading to the Greek independence. This event was the starting point of the Greek Catholics' road to political separation from the Greek Orthodox patriarchate. On account of the participation in the revolution of the Phanariots, the Greek elite in Istanbul, the Ecumenical Greek Orthodox patriarch of Constantinople was hanged in 1821. The position of the Greek Orthodox patriarch of Antioch was in turn weakened, allowing for the return in 1824 of the Greek Catholic priests who had been exiled in 1818-1820.[95] Greek Catholics emphasized that they were *Rum* but unlike the Orthodox they were not *Yūnān,* an identification with geographical Greece that hinted at the rebellion of 1821. The distance they established between them and the Greek Orthodox, defined in terms of loyalty to the Empire, helped to create the image of a loyal Greek Catholic community, acknowledged by the Ottoman State.[96] Yet, they were still to be recognized as an official *millet*.

The first steps towards the emancipation of the Greek Catholics came with the official recognition of the Catholic churches in 1831. They were now to be placed under the authority and supervision of the Armenian Catholic patriarch, speaking for all the Catholics in the

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[92] Ibid*,* vol. 12, p. 635, Procurator of patriarch-Maẓlūm, July 27th 1818.
[93] Ibid*,* vol. 12, p. 688, Mazloum, November 24th 1818.
[94] Charon Cyrille, "L'Église grecque melchite catholique (Suite.)," in *Échos d'Orient*, tome 7, no.44, (1904): 21-23.
[95] Mishāqah, *Murder, Mayhem,* 121.
[96] Masters, "The Establishment," 463-464.

Empire. They were thus officially emancipated from the authority of the Greek Orthodox patriarch in political and economic terms, although full independence still eluded them.[97] Orders were sent to the various regional governors not to persecute Catholics and to allow them to have their own churches.[98] The *millet* system was a tool to foster the loyalty of non-Muslim subject but also a tool of foreign policy. It served as a divide and rule strategy in order to neutralize the influence of foreign powers over Ottoman Christians to ensure its survival. France and Russia were competing for the protection of Ottoman Christians and for the ownership of the holy places in Palestine. Favoring Catholics was a way to counter Russian and Greek influence among the Empire's Christians which increased after the treaty of mutual assistance of Hunkiar Iskelesi in 1833 and the election of a pro-Russian Greek Orthodox Ecumenical patriarch.[99] As a result of the recognition of the Greek Catholic millet, Greek Orthodox lost their position of leadership and prestige in the empire.[100]

Maẓlūm's interventions in favor of the Greek Catholics made him quite popular in *Bilād al-Šām*. In addition, while he was away, the bishops of Tyre, Acre, Baalbek and Diyarbakir who had opposed him died or were replaced by individuals more favorable to him.[101] From among the opponents of Maẓlūm only the bishop of Beirut was left.[102] Those favorable to Maẓlūm wrote a letter to the pope to contest his suspension.[103] Maẓlūm also had a good relationship to the new pope, Gregory XVI, elected in 1831.[104] Finally, because the Holy See was worried about the internal divisions of the Greek Catholics and thought that Maẓlūm, as a patriarchal vicar, might be able to remedy them, he was allowed to come back

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[97] Ibid, 465.
[98] *Muḫtaṣar tārīḫ*, 86.
[99] Dimitri Stamatopoulos,"From Millets to Minorities in the 19th – Century Ottoman Empire: an Ambiguous Modernization," in *Citizenship in Historical Perspective*, ed. S. G. Ellis, G. Hálfadanarson, et al, (Pisa: Edizioni Plus-Pisa University Press, 2006), 256, 257.
[100] *S.C.P.F, (S.C) Greci Melchiti,* vol. 23, p. 184, Family heads of Homs, June 1st 1852. Inhabitants of Homs wrote to the Propaganda in 1852 that back in 1830, the Ottoman State diminished the political strength of the Greek Orthodox and gave superiority to Catholics.
[101] De Clercq, *Histoire des conciles*, 361.
[102] Ibid, 368.
[103] Ibid, 368.
[104] Verdeil, *La mission jésuite*, 47.

to Mount Lebanon in 1831.[105] He was accompanied by two Jesuits fathers, Benoit Planchet and Paul Riccadonna, who were supposed to take over the direction of the Greek Catholic seminar of ʿAyn Taraz which had been abandoned.[106] Maẓlūm's return coincided with the rapidly increasing Jesuit activities in the region. From 1831 until 1864, they built six residences in the region.[107] However, Maẓlūm soon abandoned his Jesuit escort, and they failed to turn the seminary into a central institution.[108] While they supported the patriarch at first, to the dismay of Franciscans and Lazarists, they ended up turning against him.[109]

Maẓlūm had promised Rome that he was not going to run for the position of bishop of Aleppo.[110] However, he had said nothing about running for the position of patriarch. On February 9th 1833, the patriarch Qaṭān died. At the same time, the apostolic delegate who had been the most opposed to Maẓlūm, Giovanni Pietro Losana, left the region. One month later, the bishops met and elected Maẓlūm as patriarch.[111] Jean Baptiste Azcher, vicar of the apostolic envoy, wrote a letter to Rome describing the election of Maẓlūm. He was very critical of Maẓlūm and of his election, which he deemed irregular. First, he explained that after the death of the patriarch Qaṭān, Emir Bašīr Šihāb's Greek Catholic adviser made a circular to the bishops saying that Maẓlūm had to be chosen. Then, the synod was planned after Easter but it was suddenly moved to Good Friday, during which the minister read a similar letter. The apostolic delegate had written a letter of protestation in the name of the Holy See to prevent Maẓlūm from being elected, but to no avail.

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[105] Ibid, 40.

[106] Ibid, 47.

[107] Chantal Verdeil,"Between Rome and France, Intransigent and Antiprotestant Jesuits in the Orient :The Beginning of the Jesuit's Mission of Syria (1831-1864),"in *Christian Witness Between Continuity and New Beginnings, Modern Historical Missions in the Middle East, ed.* M. Tamcke, M. Marten (Berlin: LIT-Verlag (Studien zur Orientalischen Kirchengeschichte), 2006), 24; On the renewal of missions in the 1830's and 1840's see Chantal Verdeil, "Travailler à la renaissance de l'Orient chrétien. Les missions latines en Syrie (1830-1945)," *Proche-Orient Chrétien* 51 (2001): Fasc 3-4, 267-316.

[108] Ibid, 25; Verdeil, *La mission jésuites*, 65-67.

[109] A.E., 166/PO-Serie D/20, vol.3, de Ségur- Aupick, March 13th 1851; Verdeil, *La mission jésuite*, 65.

[110] S.C.P.F. (S.C) Greci Melchiti, vol. 18, p. 171, Mazloum-Cardinal Pedicini, November 15th 1830.

[111] Cyrille Charon, "Les débuts du patriarcat de Maximos III Mazloum (1833-1835)," *Échos d'Orient*, tome 9, no.56 (1906): 15.

Maẓlūm was asked during the election if he had promised the Propaganda that he renounced to be elected patriarch. He answered negatively.[112] The bishops therefore all voted Maẓlūm, to one exception. The apostolic vicar Azcher then reported to the Propaganda that Maẓlūm stated that he didn't need to be confirmed by Rome to be elected patriarch, and that synods can be enacted without the authorization of Rome. This idea reflected Ādam's gallican ideas exposed in the council of Qarqafa. The vicar accused Maẓlūm of printing and distributing the council of Qarqafa.[113]

Maẓlūm, Āġābīūs Maṭār and Ǧarmānūs Ādam had insisted that the Greek Catholic church recognized the spiritual authority of Rome, yet refused its claims to impose its authority on temporal matters such as elections. Rome was to offer counsel, to assign blame and reward but not to impose its will. That this authority on temporal matters was materialized by the direct intervention of apostolic delegates or missionaries, to whose attitudes and modes of intervention many members of the clergy were opposed, did not help. However, in the community there were also those who favored this outside intervention to further their own positions within the Church, and to counter Maẓlūm's increasing power.

3. Emancipation from the Greek Orthodox: Building Confessional Cultures and the Politics of Distinction

While the Greek Catholics were officially separated from the Greek Orthodox in 1831, the various ecclesiastical resources were still monopolized by the Greek Orthodox patriarchate. Fortunately for the Greek Catholics, the election of Maẓlūm took place during the Egyptian rule over *Bilād al-Šām* which turned the situation to their advantage. In 1832, Ibrāhīm Pasha, the son of Muḥammad 'Alī the viceroy of Egypt, invaded Syria and defied the Ottoman central government. During his reign over Syria, ending in 1841, he favored Greek Catholics at the expense of Greek Orthodox and Jews who had had a predominant place in the

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[112] *S.C.P.F, (S.C) Greci Melchiti,* vol. 18, p. 248, Jean-Baptiste Azcher-Cardinal Pedicini, February 19th 1834.
[113] Ibid.

administration. This favorable disposition towards Greek Catholics can be explained by the fact that many Greek Catholic notables who had made their fortune in Egypt as well as clergy members returned to Damascus with Ibrahīm Pasha. His financial administrator was the aforementioned Ḥannā Baḥrī, a Greek Catholic who had been his adviser in Egypt. He was awarded this position which was previously the stronghold of the Jewish Fārḥī family.[114] The Greek Catholic patriarch obtained a direct access to the government through his intermediary.[115]

The Greek Catholic community, freed from the restrictions on their visibility and religious practices, started to acquire a new role in the city. When Maksīmūs Maẓlūm was elected Greek Catholic patriarch, he made a triumphant tour of centers of Greek Catholicism such as Baalbek, Mount Lebanon, Damascus, being welcomed by governors in celebration.[116] The community in Damascus built a large cathedral in 1833 in Damascus. The patriarch Maẓlūm finally settled in Damascus in 1834, for the first time since 1724.[117] He ordained all his bishops and started to institutionalize his Church.[118]

This new position and political power of the Greek Catholics during the Egyptian rule in Damascus was displayed by clothing, public processions and the building of churches.[119] All these displays angered the Greek Orthodox and led to skirmishes and episodes of violence.[120] The new patriarch Maẓlūm was accused by one of his bishops to be the cause of the persecutions of the Greek Orthodox against the Catholics. The bishop of Aleppo also

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[114] *Muḏakkirāt tārīḫīya,* 59.
[115] *Muḫtaṣar tārīḫ*, 91.
[116] Ibid, 88, 89.
[117] Ibid, 90.
[118] Maxīmūs Maẓlūm, *Nubḏa tārīḫīya : Fīmā jarā li-tāʾifat al-Rūm al-Kāṯūlīk munḏu sanat 1837 fimā ba ʿdahā,* ed. Qusṭanṭīn al-Bāšā, 35, 36.
[119] *S.C.P.F, (S.C) Greci Melchiti,* vol. 19*,* p. 337*,* Chayat, May 30th 1838; *Muḫtaṣar tārīḫ*, 90; *Muḏakkirāt tārīḫīya,* 72, 73.
[120] Johann Büssow and Khaled Safi, *Damascus affairs: Egyptian rule in Syria through the eyes of an anonymous Damascene chronicler, 1831-1841 (*Würzburg: Ergon, 2013), 80. For example, in 1832 in the city, two Greek Catholic priests were walking in the streets with their *kamilavkion* clerical hat, some Greek Orthodox children threw stones at their hats. The Greek Catholics, outraged at this attack asked the arrest of the children. At the same time, some Greek Catholic drunkards attacked Greek Orthodox in the streets, claiming immunity because of their connection to the government through Ḥannā Baḥrī.

accused Maẓlūm of coming to Damascus and parading in the streets under the nose of the Greek Orthodox to provoke them, which was not prudent.[121] Many Muslims also resented this change in status and considered that Christians, and especially Catholics, had overstepped their limits and were behaving arrogantly. This impression was shared by non-Catholic Christian chroniclers as well.[122] In retribution, after the departure of the Egyptians, there were threats against the newly built Greek Catholic churches.[123]

The Greek Orthodox patriarch of Antioch Mīṯūdiyūs used important resources to prevent the official recognition of the Greek Catholic clergy. He met with all his bishops in 1836 warning them of the spread of Catholicism and asking them to collect funds from the population to send to Istanbul for their cause.[124] In 1837 their efforts paid off. After complaining to the Ottoman authorities about the actions of the Greek Catholics, Mīṯūdiyūs obtained a *ferman* to forbid the Greek Catholics from wearing their clerical hat, a sign of prestige and recognition.[125]

Rather than taking off their hat, which would be a sign of defeat, the Greek Catholic clergy rather stayed confined in the patriarchal houses. However, they did not remain inactive. The Greek Catholics decided to engage funds and to use connections in Istanbul to obtain a *ferman* canceling the previous one. Six *ferman-s* followed, each canceling the previous one and giving the upper hand to one or the other community.[126] Each side used its connections in Istanbul, the influence of the French or Russian ambassadors, as well as bribes to imperial and local authorities to win this *ferman* competition. The affair of the hat, rather than being a simple anecdote, represents the transformations of Christian communities during the *Tanzimat* period and the institutionalization of the *millet* system. It points to the progressive

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[121] *S.C.P.F, (S.C) Greci Melchiti,* vol. 19*,* p. 337*,* Chayat, May 30th 1838.
[122] Iskandar Abkāriyūs, *Kitāb Nawādir al-zamān fī waqā'i' ğabal Lubnān*, ed. 'Abd al-Karīm al-Samak (London: Riyad el-Reyyes Books, 1987), 253.
[123] F.O., 195/196, Wood-Abderdeen, January 3rd 1842.
[124] Maẓlūm, *Nubḏa,* 3, 5.
[125] Masters, "The Establishment", 466.
[126] *Muḫtaṣar tārīḫ,* 97.

construction of the confessional border between Christian communities in *Bilād al-Šām*. This emphasis on appearance was part of a larger demand for separation and distinction between religious sects.

At the theological level, narratives of authenticity, orthodoxy, and heresy, emphasizing distinction between the two Churches, were developed. Both clergies presented themselves as the upholders of tradition and their opponents as departing from the past, as leaving 'orthodoxy'.[127] For the Greek Orthodox the Catholics, under influence of the missionaries, became *Afranǧ*[128] some 150 years ago, imitated Armenians and left the *Rum* church.[129] In order to illustrate this departure from tradition, Greek Orthodox argued that Greek Catholics should change their clothes and adopt the clerical clothing of the Latins.[130] According to this argument, the Greek Orthodox church, under the leadership of the Ecumenical patriarch of Constantinople, was the original church that had been granted privileges by Mehmed II at the conquest of Istanbul.[131] The nineteenth century saw the development of the narrative of the *millet*, which used the alleged "privileges" granted at the conquest of Constantinople to the Armenian, Greek patriarchs and Jewish Grand Rabbi to justify claims of autonomy, authority within the *millet* and access to resources from the Ottoman State.[132]

The 19th century Ottoman society was inventing tradition, yet in contradictory ways. Notions of authenticity and tradition could be used to justify existing practices and local particularities in the face of reforming movements. They could also be used to advocate for reform as well as for the homogenization of practices across the region. For example, Catholic missionaries wished to bring local Christians "back" into the fold of Catholicism from which,

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[127] Masters, "The Establishment," 467.
[128] Franks, Europeans.
[129] Mishāqah, *Murder, Mayhem*, 119.
[130] Maẓlūm, *Nubḏa,* 260.
[131] Cyrille Charon, "L'émancipation civile des Grecs Melkites (1831-1847)(fin).*" Échos d'Orient*, tome 9, no. 61 (1906): 338.
[132] Méropi Anastassiadou, *Les Grecs d'Istanbul au xixe siècle. Histoire socioculturelle de la communauté de Péra* (Leiden-Boston: Brill, 2012), 7, 8.

in their conception, they had formerly strayed. Yet, a times, the patriarchs of these local Christian communities advocated for the maintaining of their particular political, social organization and ritual practices based upon the legitimacy given to them by tradition and custom, defined as authenticity. There were therefore a variety of claims on tradition and authenticity which contradicted each other and were used as tools in the struggle for access to power.

On the Catholic side, Patriarch Maẓlūm emphasized that the patriarch of Antioch had never left the union with Rome and followed an uninterrupted line up to Saint Peter.[133] Greek Catholics argued that the Greek Orthodox, if they insisted on their schism, were to be considered as heretics and thereby would not be saved.[134] In the same manner, the Synod of Constantinople in 1722 had made clear the various distinctions between the Orthodox and Catholic creeds, creating tools to distinguish between the two communities on the ground.[135]

Claims of authenticity also had important consequences for access to various communal resources. With the same clothing and the same rites, the difference between a Greek Catholic and Orthodox priest would not be visibly marked. It was also not clear to the governors.[136] The distinction between the two churches were of a theological, ecclesiastic or political nature, regarding issues such as the jurisdiction of the Pope or the source of the Holy Spirit. Marking it visually was a way to create a physical barrier between the two clergies and entrenching the distinction between the two Churches and their followers.

The Greek Orthodox patriarch Mītūdiyūs complained that the Greek Catholic priests could go around and collect funds from the Greek Orthodox by deceiving people about their identity.[137] He thus required an obvious distinction between the two clergies so that people would not demand their services and adopt Catholicism without knowing its consequences.

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[133] Masters, "The Establishment," 110.
[134] Girard, "Le christianisme oriental," 635-637.
[135] Ibid, 620.
[136] 'al-'Awra, *Tārīḫ wilāyā,* 448.
[137] Maẓlūm, *Nubḏa,* 3.

Maẓlūm answered to the Greek Orthodox concerns, with irony: "How weak is a man's faith, if a simple cloth can change his beliefs?".[138] In a petition to the government, the Greek Catholics argued that the danger of confusing priests based on their clothing was only a pretext, for each community knew very well who their priests were.[139] Yet, they were all quite aware of the stakes in this "affair of the hat".

These arguments brought forward by Maẓlūm and his flock about the irrelevance of costumes points to the transformation of the notion of communal belonging. While belonging used to be manifested by external appearances, the Catholic reforms emphasized that faith is rather to be internalized through discipline and practices.[140] This transformation was in line with the reforms of the *Tanzimat* which tended towards the erasing of social and economic distinctions through costume, represented by the imposition of the universal fez.[141]

The rules agreed upon in the various Greek Catholic synods also show an attempt to create a physical barrier between the Orthodox and Catholic churches by forbidding the simultaneous use of the same church by both clergies, called *communicatio in sacris.[142]* Marriages between Catholics and non-Catholics also were forbidden by the Greek Catholic councils of 1806 and 1835.[143] When Maẓlūm sent circulars forbidding such marriages in Damascus, the Greek Orthodox patriarch Mītūdiyūs responded with the same interdiction for his flock.[144] Greek Orthodox patriarchs also attempted to forbid interactions between their flocks and Latins.[145]

Catholic fraternities created links of solidarity between members who vowed to help each other in defending the Catholic faith. In addition to developing certain practices such as

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[138] Maẓlūm, *Nubḏa,* 118.
[139] Ibid, 248.
[140] Heyberger, *Chrétiens du Proche-Orient*,485, 511- 515.
[141] On the fez see Donald Quataert, "Clothing Laws, State, and Society in the Ottoman Empire, 1720-1829." *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 29, no. 3 (1997): 403-404.
[142] Girard, "Le christianisme oriental," 639.
[143] De Clercq, *Histoire des conciles*, 446.
[144] Cyrille Charon, "Les débuts du patriarcat de Maximos III Mazloum (1833-1835)" *Échos d'Orient*, vol. 9, no.56 (1906): 19.
[145] Masters, "The Establishment," 458.

confession and promoting individual devotion, these fraternities also sought to regulate the public behaviour of their members and their interactions with other religious groups. Members were encouraged to look differently than the rest of the society and restrain from actions that would make them resemble Muslims, such as going out on Ramadan nights. Mixing with Christian "heretics" was also to be avoided. Similarity and closeness to other Christian sects was considered as a threat for religious integrity.[146]

The emphasis on visual distinctions after the abolition of clothing restriction for non-Muslims,[147] which was part of the *Tanzimat* reforms, denotes a need to reaffirm borders that were becoming blurry. Karen Barkey argues that in the Ottoman Empire boundaries were such an important part of everyday practices and discourses that the relation between boundaries and conflicts should be approached carefully. She argues that if boundaries are evident, individuals find ways to circumvent and weaken them. If, on the other hand, boundaries are blurry and ambiguous, individuals attempt to affirm and strengthen them because they are seen as a condition for the group's survival.[148]

Issues of ownership were embedded in claims of authenticity symbolically represented by the donning of the hat. Both the Greek Catholics and Greek Orthodox laid claims on the ownership of the churches, *waqf*, convents, and liturgical items of the See of Antioch. During these years, the affair of the hat mirrored the conflict over the ownership of churches and *waqf*. When clergy members were prevented from wearing their hats, they would go into hiding, and lose the possession of churches.

The conflict between Greek Orthodox and Greek Catholics marked the public sphere because they were large communities and had particular reciprocal relationships with local

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[146] Bernard Heyberger, "Confréries, Dévotions et Société chez les Catholiques Orientaux," in *Confréries et Dévotions dans la Catholicité Moderne (mi-XIIe-début XIXe siècle),* ed. Bernard Dompnier and Paola Vismara (Rome: Ecole Française de Rome, 2008), 232, 237- 238.

[147] On the abolition of clothing distinction during the *Tanzimat* see Donald Quataert, "Clothing Laws," 403-404.

[148] Karen Barkey, *Empire of difference: The Ottomans in Comparative Perspective* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 119.

decision makers. However, this conflict over property was also mirrored in smaller Christian communities present in the city, such as Syrian Catholics and Syrian Orthodox.[149]

The legitimization of a community through a reference to continuity, tradition, and authenticity coincided with the Ottoman conception of the *millet* and the rights of religious communities as articulated in the nineteenth century. In this period, the notion of "equality of the *millet*" which was part of the *Tanzimat* reforms came to mean that what is appointed to one group cannot be disposed of or sold to another group. A church belonging to one sect cannot be expropriated or sold to another sect. Either the sect uses it or the state retakes control of it. This ruling was made in the nineteenth century to answer to the practical issues arising from the multiplication of the *millets*.[150] Thus, the question of who was the initial owner, who had the legitimacy of tradition, became a crucial issue for the ownership of all ecclesiastical goods and properties.

This ruling came into conflict, however, with another important notion in jurisprudence that "unbelief is one *millet*". It means that the government is not to make distinctions between different non-Muslim communities, because they are all one community outside the Islamic one. In the various *fatwā* given to Maẓlūm from various *'ulamā'*, this expression is interpreted to mean that one community cannot impose on another. Thus, if one group split because of differences of beliefs, or if someone changed religion, there was nothing the patriarch or Grand Rabbi could do. Maẓlūm obtained *fatwa* from three *'ulamā'* of Egypt, as well as from the Mufti of Beirut.[151] They all agreed that the Greek Orthodox patriarch could not impose anything on the Greek Catholics. One *fatwā* mentioned that there

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[149] Weber, Stefan. *Damascus : Ottoman Modernity and Urban Transformation (1808-1918).* 2 vols, Proceedings of the Danish Institute in Damascus. Århus Denmark: Aarhus University Press, 2009), 59, 60; For the conflict between the Syrian Orthodox and Syrian Catholic regarding the places of worship see A.E., 166/PO-Serie D/20, vol. 1, Beaudin-Roussin, June 10th 1836; F.O., 195/196, Canning-Wood, May 19th 1842; BOA, A.DVN.24.22, August 19th 1847.

[150] Ahmad Atif Ahmad, "On the Cusp of Modernity Reading Ibn 'Abidin of Damascus (1784–1836,)" *in Islam, Modernity, Violence, and Everyday Life*, ed. Ahmad Atif Ahmad (Palgrave: Macmillan US, 2009), 62; Maẓlūm, *Nubḏa,* 173, 179; Muḥammad Amīn ibn ʿĀbidīn, *Radd al-muḥtār ʿalā al-durr al-muḥtār* (Ryad: Dār 'ālim al-Kutub, 2003), 330.

[151] Maẓlūm, *Nubḏa,* 173, 179.

was no requirement for Christian sects to have a different appearance among themselves; they should only look different than Muslims.[152] The *Tanzimat* reforms also abolished clothing restrictions and allowed conversion, strengthening the argument of Maẓlūm.

When the Ottoman central government retook control of Damascus in 1841, the balance of power between the two communities shifted again. The influence of France was challenged by its support to Ibrahīm Pasha and Great Britain took the upper hand in the empire.[153] Those who had allied with Ibrahīm Pasha were dismissed from positions of power.[154] At the same time, the Greek Orthodox patriarch was able to regain his influence and obtain orders to restrict the Greek Catholics' use of the hat. While Maẓlūm had gained the favour of Sultan Mahmud II, his death in 1839 and the succession of Sultan Abdülmecid was initially more inclined towards Russian influence and the Greek Orthodox.[155] Mītūdiyūs managed to get a *ferman* in 1842 through the Russian ambassador's influence to prevent them from wearing the hat and, as a consequence, clergy members in Damascus who were caught wearing the hat were arrested.[156]

When in 1842 the clergy members were forbidden from appearing in public with the clerical hat, the *qalūsa*, the priests of Damascus went into hiding into private houses, waiting for the situation to change. They asked for the help of the French consul. After some hesitation, he decided to encourage them to go out in public wearing the hat. The governor arrested one of the clergy members who wore the hat and asked one of them if he was a subject of France or of the sultan. When one of the clergy members answered that he was the latter's, the governor said that Catholics lost this status because they did not obey the governor and instead listened to the French consul's orders. Wearing the hat was seen by the

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[152] Ibid, 179.
[153] A.E. CPC/ 67/vol. 1, Ratti-Menton-Guizot, January 8th 1841.
[154] F.O., 78/447, Werry-Palmerstone, August 21st 1841.
[155] Maximos Mazloum, *Mémoire sur l'état actuel de l'église grecque catholique dans le levant (*Marseille : Imprimerie d'Achard, 1841), 12.
[156] Ibid, 12, 13.

governor as a rebellion not against the Greek Orthodox patriarch but against the state itself, for it defied the order published by the sultan.[157] Clothing visually represented conflicting claims of jurisdiction over local Christians.

In 1844, the Greek Catholic patriarch Maẓlūm won his independence from the Armenian Catholic patriarch.[158] Letters were sent by Istanbul to the governors of Syria to treat Maẓlūm in the best of manners.[159] His bishops obtained a *berat* recognizing them as official representatives of the community.[160] A few months earlier, the negotiations around the hat had turned in favour of the Greek Catholics, hinting at the upcoming recognition of Maẓlūm as the head of his *millet*. The Ottoman foreign minister proposed to create a hat on which would appear a *nīšān* (the medal of the sultan with his signature) with a crown toppled by a cross. A more Ottoman hat could not be imagined. The crown hinted at the Melkite or *Rum* identity.[161] Finally, in 1847 the patriarch Maẓlūm was recognized as the patriarch of the Greek Catholics of Antioch, Jerusalem, Alexandria and all the East.[162] The hat that was decided upon by the government for the Greek Catholic clergy would be the same as the Greek Orthodox except that the top part will be six-sided, and both the hat and the veil would be purple. Purple also represented the Byzantine heritage. The Greek Orthodox patriarch complained about this hat, but he no longer had any say in this affair and the matter ended thirty years after it had first started.[163]

The "affair of the hat" was not solely an ecclesiastical affair. It became the materialization of conflicting narratives of legitimacy, authenticity, and tradition. These narratives were important stakes in the competition for access to resources. Symbolizing the abolition of various privileges awarded to the *Rum* leadership, the "affair of the hat" was well

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[157] A.E. CPC/67-1,Sayour-Beaudin , January 3rd 1842.
[158] Maẓlūm, *Nubḏa,* 120.
[159] BOA, A.MKT.14.58, July 27th 1844.
[160] Maẓlūm, *Nubḏa,* 120.
[161] Ibid, 112.
[162] Masters, " The Establishment," 469.
[163] BOA. A.DVN.31.29, September 9th 1847.

embedded in the *Tanzimat* reforms. This period was characterized by a reshuffling of social and political hierarchies. The social contract that had ruled relations between Muslims and non-Muslims was gradually abolished. In the same manner, the structure of Christian communities and their relation to the state were redefined, giving rise to various claims of self-representation and autonomy in regards to the existing leadership structure. These transformations unraveled in a period of foreign threats and internal secession. In this context, loyalty and treason became central notions to delegitimize one's opponent or to obtain state recognition. Clothing, and especially hats, embodied these larger dynamics of the *Tanzimat*.

After his recognition by the Ottoman State, Maẓlūm came back victorious to Aleppo in 1850 and paraded in the city with all the clothing of prestige to display his final triumph against the Greek Orthodox. This event is pointed to some as the causes of the violence against Christians as it pictured the Greek Catholics as extremely wealthy. Indeed, in February 1850, the Greek Catholic Bishop of Baalbek criticized Maẓlūm for behaving as an Ottoman prince, taking decisions unilaterally and going around the country parading on his horse.[164] Another bishop also mentioned that those who attacked the Christians in 1850 wanted to kill the patriarch himself.[165] The parades of the patriarch were often blamed for causing interconfessional tensions.[166] Maẓlūm was aware that such accusations circulated against him. Indeed, he received a letter from Cardinal Franzoni, prefect of the Propaganda Fide, blaming him for the attacks against Christians in Aleppo in 1850, because of his lavish procession and displays of power when he entered the city. Maẓlūm protested and declared that such accusations originated from his opponents who tried to delegitimize him.[167] 'Aṭā, the Greek Catholic bishop of Hama and Homs, also described the situation on October 9th 1850, a week before the violence erupted in Aleppo. He narrated that he spent a lot of money

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[164] *S.C.P.F, (S.C) Greci Melchiti,* vol. 22, p. 396, Athanasio bishop of Baalbek, February 27th 1850.
[165] Ibid, vol. 22, p. 712, Antachi bishop of Aleppo, December 13Th 1850.
[166] Ibid, vol. 21, p 1029, Abdallah Messabini, November 13th 1848.
[167] Ibid, vol. 22, p. 753, Mazlum, January 10th 1851.

building the new Greek Catholic churches which angered the Greek Orthodox who wrote to the governor and accused him of rebellion against the government. It encouraged the governor to take the Greek Catholic churches and turn them into barracks for soldiers.[168]

The competition for recognition, resource and followers between the Greek Orthodox and Greek Catholics but also among Catholics in this period encouraged them to build larger and more luxurious churches,[169] to obtain more visibility in the public realm and gain prestige through obtaining the protection of foreign powers. These strategies of recognition contributed to the impression that Christians were the main beneficiaries of the reforms and that they became the elite of the city. The British consul in 1860 made a direct link between the construction of luxurious religious buildings and houses by Christians and the attacks of 1860.[170]

In conclusion, the Greek Catholic Church formed its institutions in the 19th century in line with the Ottoman *Tanzimat* and the transformation of society towards the building of confessional cultures and the intensification of religious identification. It sought to carve a space of autonomy in the Catholic world and in the Ottoman society through distinction and separation with fellow Catholics and with the Greek Orthodox community. These transformations were necessary to enjoy the authority and jurisdiction given by the Ottoman State to the *millet* as modern centralized institutions under the authority of their patriarch. However, the institutionalization of the Church caused conflicts and tensions with Rome and between Christian communities which at times evolved into violence. The example of Greek Catholics points to the politicization of religious identity as a society-wide phenomenon born out of the rise of a modern Ottoman State and society. It also challenges the notion of non-Muslim *millet* as cultural and religious units with full-fledged institutions.

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[168] Ibid*, vol. 22, p. 661, Gregorio Ata, October 9th 1850.
[169] Weber, *Ottoman Damascus*, vol. 2, 55; F.O., 78/1520, Bulwer-Brant, August 30th 1860.
[170] F.O., 195/601, Brant-Bulwer, August 25th 1860.

CHAPTER 3: MAKSĪMŪS MAẒLŪM'S REFORM OF THE GREEK CATHOLIC CHURCH: INSTITUTIONALIZATION, HOMOGENIZATION AND CENTRALIZATION

In the previous chapter, we described how the Greek Catholic community struggled to obtain its emancipation from the Greek Orthodox clergy while negotiating a certain level of autonomy from Rome. Once the community was established as a *millet* in the Ottoman Empire, the high clergy and especially the patriarch Maksīmūs Maẓlūm embarked on a process of institutionalization. It entailed a centralization of resources and power, and was underlined by a discourse which claimed to increase transparency and efficiency in the administration. This centralization also took the form of the construction a confessional culture, the intensification of religious identity and the homogenization of the flock by marking a visual and ritual distinction with the other Catholic communities such as Maronites or Latin missionaries. Through these processes, the high clergy sought to create a sense of belonging among its flock through rites and religious practices. This attempt to separate communities was underlined by a concern with authority, jurisdiction and ownership of ecclesiastical property fostered by the nature of the Ottoman *Tanzimat* reforms. In many ways, the internal reforms of the Greek Catholic community mirrored the larger transformations of the Ottoman state structure and administration.

These internal reforms were encouraged by the Ottoman State as part of the institutionalization of the Ottoman *milel* and coincided in part to the efforts of the Congregation of the Propaganda Fide to structure the local Catholic Churches towards more transparency, hierarchization and increased separation between the laity and the clergy. Yet,

in many occasions the reformist agenda of the Propaganda Fide frustrated the patriarch Maẓlūm's will for autonomy and authority, leading to prolonged conflicts with missionaries and apostolic delegates.

This transformation of the Greek Catholic community into a homogeneous autonomous and centralized institution marked a break with the traditionally diffused and multileveled organization of the community, which had allowed individuals some level of interstitial freedom in their worship and daily lives. This process thus led to multiple resistances which marked lines of conflict within the institutionalizing Greek Catholic *millet*. The reforms were challenged by various bodies, such as fraternities and monastic orders which had been an important basis of solidarity and identification and had played an integral role in the power struggle of the Greek Catholic flock.

In this chapter, we will explore the transformation to the structure of the Greek Catholic Church initiated by the patriarch Maksīmūs Maẓlūm and the various conflicts that arose around these reforms. It will shed light on the way in which the institutionalization of the *millet* during the *Tanzimat* and the creation of confessional cultures were challenged by other forms of belonging and identification dynamics. First, we will focus on Maẓlūm's conflict with the monastic orders and his will to increase the power of the high clergy at their expense. Then, we will look at his attempt to create a homogenized community through marking separation and distinction with other Catholics through the imposition of the Greek rite. Finally, it will focus on the end of Maẓlūm's rule and the conflicts that arose from his policies of centralization which strengthened factionalism within the Church. This factionalism in turn contributed to the politicization of the Greek Catholic community.

1. Centralizing Resources and Challenging the Monastic Orders: Property and Appointments

1.1 Separating the Lay and Clerical Elements

The key aspects of the *Tanzimat* reforms, centralization, standardization, systemization and the rule of law were already at play among the Christian community of *Bilād al-Šām* in the 18th century as a consequence of the Catholic reform, but encountered strong centrifugal forces. Indeed, the organization of the Greek Catholic community was not to the liking of the Congregation of the Propaganda Fide in Rome, responsible for Catholic missionary works. The Congregation sought to enforce the decisions of the Council of Trent (1542-1563),[1]. which had enacted a process of reform based on pontifical absolutism and centralization. It included an emphasis on transparency, hierarchization and separation between lay and clerical elements. The familial and local administration of the Church was to be transformed into a centralized, top-down type of management of ecclesiastical resources and clergy members.[2] In this sense, the internal transformations mirror the reforms of the Ottoman State during the *Tanzimat*.

The ecclesiastical reforms focused extensively on monastic orders. They were to be placed under the direct jurisdiction of bishops and cut off from the influence of the laity. The Council also sought to put and end to the laity's involvement in the the election of bishops, which, while not justified textually, had been customary in Roman Catholicism. Monks and priests, to be formed in seminaries, were to be clearly distinguished from the common folk. The bishops' power, while strengthened by the Council, was seen as directly rooted in the Pope's mandate, and was not independent. However, the application of these principles encountered a strong opposition in the Roman church itself.[3]

The Holy See saw the involvement of laymen into the administration of the Church as problematic. In the same manner, the economic relationship between monks and the laity was also seen as a possible source of corruption of the monastic orders as it allowed for the intrusion of lay politics into the daily life of monasteries, causing divisions within the orders.

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[1] The main council in the history of Catholicism.
[2] de Clercq, *Histoire des conciles*, 419.
[3] Ibid.

The professional activities and personal resources of the monks were recurring issues in the 19th century. Were monks supposed to have personal funds or did they have to give everything to the orders? Was a monk to be entirely devoted to the service of his order or could he engage in mundane matters? Who was to inherit from monks? Was their properties personal or ecclesiastical? Monastical statuses prohibited monks from engaging in any economic activity as they took the vow of poverty,[4] However, it seems to have been a common practice in the region. Monasteries were also producing institutions, involved in commerce and agriculture.[5] Monks were also commonly accused of leaving a luxurious life, thus contributing to the idea of the riches lying around in the monasteries and turning them into targets of plunder.[6] These questions were related to the power relations within monasteries. To deprive monks of personal funds was a way to ensure hierarchy in the monasteries.[7]

The lack of control over monks, and their illegitimate mobility is also often seen to be the cause of all disorders and rebellions. Patriarch Maẓlūm, together with the apostolic delegates attempted to control the mobility of priests and monks, to assign them to a territory and prevent them returning to their families in the cities. It demonstrated an attempt at population control and territorialization, which is also observable in the 19th century objectives of the Ottoman government.[8] It also corresponded to the objectives of the Tridentine reform of the Roman Catholic Church.[9]

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[4] de Clercq, *Histoire des conciles*, 407.

[5] *S.C.P.F, (S.C) Greci Melchiti,* vol. 19 , p. 3, Anastasio Bishop of Baalbek, 1837.

[6] Ibid, vol. 20, p. 568, Bishop of Beirut Agabios to superior Basilian Chouerite *Baladī* monks, March 12th 1842; Ibid, vol. 19, p. 727, Villardel, December 9th 1839; Ibid, vol. 19, p. 439, Mazlum, September 20th 1838; Ibid, vol. 20, p. 658, Villardel, July 28th 1842; Ibid, vol. 19, p.727, Apostolic delegation Lebanon to Cardinal Franzoni, October 8th 1839.

[7] See the consequence of these various interpretations of the role of monks in the conflict that arose in 1835, when Ǧibrīl Ṭawīl, a Salvatorian, died and gave all of his inheritance to the Salvatorians; *S.C.P.F, (S.C) Greci Melchiti,* vol. 18, p. 529, Pietro Kahil, December 21st 1835.

[8] As exemplified by the stricter definition of provincial borders by the vilayet law of 1864. See Stanford J. Shaw and Ezel Kural Shaw, *History of the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey. Volume II: Reform, Revolution, and Republic: The Rise of Modern Turkey, 1808–1975* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977), 88-90.

[9] Heyberger, *Les chrétiens du proche-orient*, 92.

The patriarch and the apostolic delegates encouraged a process of territorialization of the Church, where parishes and bishoprics had to be clearly defined and priests, bishops and patriarchs had to reside in their own.[10] Given the unstable history of the Greek Catholic Church, spread across the region and having to flee patriarchal residences and bishoprics, not to reside in one's own bishopric had become a habit of the high clergy.[11] Some bishoprics only had a few families, which could not sustain the expenses of a bishop, who often preferred to live in the cities or in the monasteries of Mount Lebanon. Just as Ottoman administrative regions were more clearly defined and administered, and especially in the form of the *vilayet* law of 1864, ecclesiastical units were to be more efficiently administrated and delimited. Their resources and property were also be put in order and accounts presented, in line with the *Tanzimat* reforms in the administration.[12]

Then, just as the Ottoman State attempted to cut down the power base of governors by changing their post often, Maẓlūm recommended that priests only stay in the same parish for three months. In this way, they would not have the time and resources to build they own power base to defy the power of the secular clergy and especially the bishops.[13]

The patriarch also attempted reduce the influence of the laity in the appointment of priests by entrusting it to the bishop.[14] Family relations had always been an important determinant of clerical appointments at all the levels of the Greek Catholic church. Secular priests were married, which also fostered the formation of clerical dynasties.[15] The attempt to

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[10] de Clercq, *Histoire des conciles*, 400; This requirement was already highlighted by the council of Qarqafa in 1806; Ibid, 350.

[11] Haïssa Boustani, "Réglement général des patriarcats melkites," Échos d'Orient, vol. 10, no.67 (1907): 359, 361.

[12] de Clercq, *Histoire des conciles*,

[13] *S.C.P.F, (S.C) Greci Melchiti,* vol. 19, p. 486, Mazlum, November 26th 1838.

[14] Miḫāʾīl Mišāqā, *Tabrīya al-mathūm mimā qaḏafahu bihi al-Baṭrīyark Maksīmūs Maẓlūm* (Beirut, 1854), 40.

[15] Heyberger, *Les chrétiens du Proche-Orient*, 92.

reduce the role of the laity in the appointment of priests gave rise to a strong opposition on the part of the notables in Damascus and Aleppo.[16]

The patriarch Maẓlūm and the representatives of the Congregation of the Propaganda Fide thus attempted to encourage the adoption of measures in the Greek Catholic synods which would sever the links between the laity and the monasteries.[17] However, these regulations were only applied partially.[18] Separating the monasteries from the laity was a particularly difficult task in Mount Lebanon, where civil and religious authorities intertwined. This process met with the opposition of ruling families who had come to consider the monasteries as their property.

1.2 The Rise of the Secular Clergy

The Council of Trent demanded the creation of seminaries to form the secular clergy,[19] effectively competing with monasteries who formed the regular clergy. The Council of Saint Savior which took place in 1811 under the patriarchate of Āġābīūs Maṭār was designed to regulate the creation of such a seminary to form the secular clergy in 'Ayn Taraz.[20] It was based upon the model of the Maronite seminary of Ayn Warqā which formed most of the Christian Arab intellectuals in the beginning of the Nahḍa.[21] This new college was to become the residence of the patriarch, in an effort to shield him from the influence of the monasteries in which he used to reside.[22] The rector of the seminary was to be designated by the patriarch himself. Maksīmūs Maẓlūm, before he became patriarch, was named as the first rector and

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[16] *S.C.P.F, (S.C) Greci Melchiti,* vol. 18, p. 222, Gregorio Chayat, August 26 1833; Ibid, vol. 21, p. 906, Letter of Damascenes, March 6th 1848.
[17] See for example de Clercq, *Histoire de conciles*, 378, 405.
[18] Ibid, 396.
[19] Clergy members who do not belong to a religious order.
[20] Ibid, 362, 363.
[21] Butrus al-Bustani, *The Clarion of Syria: A Patriot's Call against the Civil War of 1860*, trans. Jens Hanssen, Hicham Safieddine (Oakland: University of California Press, 2019), 23.
[22] de Clercq, *Histoire des conciles*, 367; Previously the patriarch had resided in the Salvadorian monastery of Dayr al-Muḫallaṣ close to Sidon. As in the case of the Maronite, the missionaries saw the residence of the patriarch in the monasteries as making him more vulnerable to the influence of the notables; Richard Van Leeuwen, "The Control of Space and Communal Leadership : Maronites Monasteries in Mount Lebanon," in *Revue du monde musulman et de la Méditerranée*, no.79-80, Biens communs, patrimoines collectifs et gestion comunautaire dans les sociétés musulmanes, dir. Sylvie Denoix (1996): 190.

came to embody the rise of the secular clergy. This seminary was to be funded by the population as well. In fact, the council decided that the clergy should request public donations, and inheritance should be taxed.[23] Monastic orders, especially the Salvadorian monks, opposed the seminary, as they saw it as competing with their parochial services. However, the seminary of 'Ayn Taraz was soon closed because of the conflict between Druzes and Maronites in Mount Lebanon as well as financial problems, which eventually led to its abandonment.[24]

The development of the secular clergy was also accompanied by an increased role for bishops. When Greek Catholics obtained some level of freedom in the exercise of their religious rites, bishops were instituted in the bishoprics, and they started ordaining secular priests and taking control of the place of worship. This institutionalization of the secular clergy was resented by the Salvatorians and Chouerites monastic orders who felt that their traditional rights on the seats of Beirut and Sidon were being trampled upon.[25][26] The bishops wanted to obtain the most resourceful bishoprics, in this period being the coastal cities, where trade developed. Their personal resources depended directly on the resources of the local Greek Catholic community.[27] The power balance between the various ecclesiastical institutions shifted away from the monastic orders and towards the high clergy, thus effectively initiating a process of centralization of power and resources.

1.3 Contested Ownership of Churches

Ecclesiastical property was an important stake in the hierarchization of the Greek Catholic Church through the reinforcement of the role of the high clergy. We have seen in the previous chapter that the division between the Greek Orthodox and the Greek Catholics raised

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[23] de Clercq, *Histoire des conciles*, 362, 363.
[24] Hajjar, *Un lutteur infatigable,* 64; Slim, *The Greek Orthodox Waqf*, 42.
[25] *S.C.P.F, (S.C) Greci Melchiti,* vol. 11, p. 304, Agabios Tawil to Rome, January 20th 1802.
[26] Ibid, vol 11, p. 257, Agabios Tawil, May 1800. The bishop of Beirut was consequently involved into a prolonged conflict with the Chouerite St John monks.The Salvatorians also lobbied against the nomination of a bishop for Sidon.
[27] *S.C.P.F, (S.C) Greci Melchiti,* vol 11, p. 322, Gabrielle Debbas, April 16th 1802.

the question of property ownership. When the Greek Catholic community obtained its partial recognition by the Ottoman government in 1837, there were no more obstacles to the construction of churches. The Egyptian ruler Ibrāhīm ʿAlī's facilitating policies regarding the construction of churches[28] together with the influx of foreign charity led to a building spree in *Bilād al-Šām*. However, the issues were now internal as the ownership of these new churches were highly contested. Did they belong to the monastic orders, the patriarchate, the bishopric or the laity? Maẓlūm displayed a will to bring all the properties of the Greek Catholic church under the patriarchate or the bishoprics, thus mimicking the process of centralization of property of the Ottoman State. It also corresponded to the project of the reform of the Congregation of the Propaganda Fide which emphasized that property was to be put under the strict control of the religious hierarchy.[29]

The multi-leveled ownership of ecclesiastical lands and goods was challenged and various actors attempted to claim full ownership. For Maẓlūm, ecclesiastical property belonged to the high clergy. The lower clergy and the orders could not own property in their own name. This notion of institutional property was quite foreign to the tradition of the Greek Catholic church. It denied the multiple and overlapping system of property that had existed so far in the empire, in which various actors, from farmers to large landowners, had some level of property rights. The process is in line with the Ottoman land reform which sought to identify a single owner for each property. The 19th century saw increasing conflicts, delimitation, trials over the land estates, including ecclesiastical property. While the 18th century had been the period of expansion of monasteries lands, of alliance with emirs and feudal chiefs, in the 19th century these acquisitions had to be made official through a process of centralization and constitution of these estates[30], paralleling the registering policies of the Ottoman State.

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[28] Ibid, vol. 18, p. 407, Zogheb, June 15th 1835.
[29] *S.C.P.F, (S.C) Greci Melchiti,* vol 11, p. 304 Agabios Tawil to secretary Congregation, January 20th 1802.
[30] Slim, *The Greek Orthodox Waqf*, 95.

The patriarch Maẓlūm managed to obtain the ownership of various churches and to dispossess the monastic orders, especially from the Salvatorians. Maẓlūm argued that himself and the community had paid for all the churches and the seminary[31] and were thus to be the recipient of charity from Europe directed at reimbursing the expenses. However, since the Salvatorians, unlike the patriarch, had representatives in Rome and Naples, they were charged with collecting funds. Maẓlūm accused them of keeping the charity for themselves.[32] He thereby asked the Propaganda to send funds to him directly.[33] To do so, he appointed a direct representative in Rome.[34]

The Propaganda stated that funds should be given directly to the apostolic delegates who were charged with the distribution on the ground.[35] Yet, Greek Catholics often managed to obtain a letter from Rome giving them the right to collect funds by themselves. Various representatives were sent to Europe to collect funds on behalf of the patriarch or various institutions such as monastic orders. In addition to going to the funding institutions such as the Pontifical Society for the Propagation of Faith in Lyon, they also went around cities with Greek Catholic communities and collected donations from the population directly.[36] These individuals were often bishops, which gave them a certain level of legitimacy to obtain funds.[37] However, the archbishops of Marseille and Lyon started to grow suspicious of these individuals.[38] In one case, a Greek Catholic bishop even forged a letter from the

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[31] *S.C.P.F, (S.C) Greci Melchiti,* vol. 18, p. 579, Mazlum, April 22nd 1836.

[32] *S.C.P.F, (S.C) Greci Melchiti,* vol. 18, p. 573, Maẓlūm, March 20th 1836.

[33] Ibid, vol. 18, p. 573, Mazlum, March 20th 1836; Ibid, vol. 19, p. 570, Basilios Fende, March 5th 1839.

[34] Ibid, vol. 18, p. 577, Giovani Dopus, April 22nd 1836.

[35] Ibid, vol 25, p. 108, Pontifical Society for the Propagation of Faith in Lyon, May 21st 1858.

[36] Ibid, vol. 25, p. 29, Society for the Propagation of Faith in Lyon, January 22nd 1858.

[37] Heyberger, "La France et la protection des chrétiens maronites," 26.

[38] *S.C.P.F, (S.C) Greci Melchiti,* vol. 21, p. 49; The theme of 'Orientals' coming to ask funds in Europe was already an issue for monarchies and the Congregation of the Propaganda Fide in the 18th century, see Bernard Heyberger, "La France et la protection des chrétiens maronites. Généalogie d'une représentation" *Relations internationales,* no. 173 (2018/1): 26; Bernard Heyberger, "Chrétiens orientaux dans l'Europe catholique (XVIIe – XVIIIe s.)," in *Hommes de l'entre-deux. Parcours individuels et portraits de groupe sur la frontière méditerranéenne,* dir. Bernard Heyberger, Chantal Verdeil, 61-94 (Paris, Les Indes Savantes).

Congregation of the Propaganda stating that he should be given funds.[39] The funds collected by the bishops could also be monopolized and serve as a tool of power back home, or to challenge the authority of the patriarch.[40] The control over the influx of charity was thus an important part of the centralization reforms.

Rather than encouraging the unity of Greek Catholics, these funds created strong divisions. This discord was due to the polycentric nature of the Greek Catholic institutions. The need to channel and organize foreign funds created the imperative of centralizing the administration of the church and turn it into a top-down power structure. Charity thus contributed to transforming the Greek Catholic Church. The superiors of monastic orders, monastery superiors, bishops and patriarchs disputed the ownership of these funds and of the buildings erected with them.[41]

Conflicts over the ownership of the churches took place regarding the church of Jaffa[42] and Alexandria.[43] In Damascus, two years after the building of the Greek Catholic church,[44] the superior of the Salvatorians, Buṭrus Kaḥīl wrote a letter to the Propaganda explaining that the monks had contributed so much to the building of the church of Damascus that they were now destitute. He thus demanded to obtain funds from Rome through the order's procurator Yūsuf Zuġīb. He also asked help from Rome against the intrigues of the patriarch Maẓlūm who, according to him, wanted to destroy his order by making them destitute.[45]

1.4 Centralizing Clerical Appointments

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[39] *S.C.P.F, (S.C) Greci Melchiti,* vol 24. p.735, Secretary Society for Propagation of Faith in Lyon, May 29th 1857.

[40] Frédéric Pichon, *Maaloula (XIXᵉ-XXIᵉ siècles). Du vieux avec du neuf: Histoire et identité d'un village chrétien de Syrie* (Beirut: Presses de l'Ifpo, 2010), 118.

[41] See for example, *S.C.P.F, (S.C) Greci Melchiti,* vol. 18, p. 588, Pietro Cahil, May 23rd 1836.

[42] *S.C.P.F, (S.C) Greci Melchiti,* vol. 18, p. 588, Pietro Cahil, May 23rd 1836. Ibid, vol 19, p. 486, Mazlum, November 26th 1838.

[43] For the conflicts over the church of Alexandria see *S.C.P.F, (S.C) Greci Melchiti,* vol. 19, p. 193, Antoine Bulad, July 27th 1837; Ibid, vol. 19, p. 285, Guisepe Saba and others, November 17th 1837.

[44] *S.C.P.F, (S.C) Greci Melchiti,* vol. 18, p. 205, Annex to letter apostolic delegate Villardel, July 1833.

[45] *S.C.P.F, (S.C) Greci Melchiti,* vol. 18, p. 495, Pietro Kahil, December 21st 1835.

Appointments of clergy members were another point of contention within the Greek Catholic Church. In addition to centralizing resources and ecclesiastic property, Maẓlūm set out to appoint his protégés in important positions of power, especially in regions less favorable to him. Who was to elect the superior of an order or convent? Was it to be bishops, patriarchs, apostolic delegate or monks? All these authorities increasingly claimed the right to choose the superior of a convent, thus completely by-passing the rights of the monks. The 19th century saw the self-determination and autonomy of monasteries threatened by the increased power struggles at the level of the high clergy.

While Maẓlūm displayed a will to homogenize the Greek Catholic community, he also reinforced divisions based on regional identifications by using the existing rivalry between monks of different localities and families to further his control over the Church institutions. He used the reforms encouraged by the Ottoman State and the Congregation of Propaganda Fide vis à vis transparency, hierarchization and the separation between the laity and the monasteries, to increase his own decision-making power.

For example, in 1829, the Chouerite order was further split into an Aleppine and a Chouerite (*Baladī*) branch based on theological divisions but also on geographical distinctions and ʿaṣabīya. This antagonism took root in divergences of approaches to monastic life in these two orders but also more pragmatically in conflicts of interest between clergy members. Two factions can be determined, one associated with the cities of the hinterland, and especially Aleppo, and another one called the *Baladī* associated with the smaller scale cities of Mount Lebanon and Damascus.[46] Previously, the *Baladī* had mobilized the main positions within the order, such as the representatives to the Holy See.[47] Once officially separated, the Aleppines demanded to have one of their own as a representative in Rome and set out to

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[46] The Chouerite branch (*Baladī*) kept the monastery of Ḍhur al-Šuayr, Zaḥle and Kafar Šimā (close to Beirut). The Aleppine branch got the monastery of Rās Baʿlbak, Mār Šaʿīyā and Dayr el-Šīḥ.
[47] *S.C.P.F, (S.C) Greci Melchiti,* vol. 17, p. 50, Basilios Chayat, February 13th 1830.

divide resources between the two branches.[48] This rivalry between inhabitants of Damascus, Mount Lebanon and Aleppo is neither particular to the Christians nor to the Ottoman period. Christians were well embedded into the city-based competitions that ran across religious lines. In the Salvadorian order, there were similar conflicts between the Damascene and Lebanese branches.[49]

Maẓlūm, himself an Aleppine, relied on the Aleppine Basilian Chouerites to increase his power base to counter the power of both the *Baladī* among the Chouerites and the Salvatorians.[50] In order to increase his authority, Maẓlūm claimed that he could elect superiors of monasteries, curators and bishops by himself.[51] The example of Zaḥle is quite telling in this aspect. Zahliotes were divided in two factions. The elections of bishops often brought to light these divisions. For example in 1835 the bishop of Zaḥle Iǧnāsīū Aǧǧūrī died. Some Zahliotes wanted a Salvatorian bishop. Others wanted a Chouerite. Both presented themselves as the majority. Those who wanted a Chouerite were supported by the Jesuits fathers Planchet and Ricadonna, who had come to Syria with Maẓlūm. Maẓlūm also preferred a Chouerite Aleppine bishop, as he was involved in a prolonged conflict with the Salvatorians.[52] He chose Bāsil Šaīyāṭ, the superior of the Aleppine branch of the Chouerites (1829-1833), as bishop. Šaīyāṭ had also been named superior of the controversial college 'Ayn Taraz, who had reopened thanks to the Jesuits.[53] He was thus favored by the Jesuit fathers. This election caused the party of the Salvatorians to rise in rebellion. Six hundred of the opponents came out in protest, yet the patriarch answered that it was his privilege to elect whoever he saw fit.[54]

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[48] Ibid, vol 17, p. 270, Letter from Damascenes, August 26th 1830.
[49] *S.C.P.F, (S.C) Greci Melchiti,* vol. 24, p. 737, Basilio Sidaoui, April 19th 1857.
[50] Ibid, vol. 19, p. 39 , Gregorio Chayat, January 5th 1836.
[51] Ibid, vol. 19, p. 39, Gregorio Chayat, January 5th 1836.
[52] Ibid, vol. 18, p. 321, Collective letter of 36 individuals presented by the Jesuits Planchet and Ricadona, 1835.
[53] Verdeil, "Between Rome and France", 24-25.
[54] *S.C.P.F, (S.C) Greci Melchiti,* vol. 18, p. 369, Translation of letter by Antonio Bulad, 1835.

The role played by Maẓlūm in the elections also bothered the lay elite of Damascus which had benefited from a great level of influence over the monasteries beforehand. They saw their family members replaced at the head of the orders by monks originating from Zaḥle, who were seen as social climbers. Maẓlūm relied on the Zahliots to counter the influence of the Damascenes among the monks, who were part of the bastion of the traditional elite of the community.[55]

In addition to intervening directly in the election of superiors, Maẓlūm often chose patriarchal vicars to represent him from among the secular clergy, thus causing tensions with the monastic orders and their lay patrons.[56] For example, the patriarchal vicar of Damascus, Mīḫāʾīl ʿAṭā was not a Damascene, but a Zahliot. Mīḫāʾīl ʿAṭā was not part of an order but had rather been chosen by Maẓlūm directly from among the laymen. The fact that he was a secular and not a regular clergy member rendered him illegitimate in the eyes of the Damascenes, themselves linked to the Salvatorian order.[57] The Damascene notables argued that the vicar needed to be a man from the city not a foreigner.[58]

Arguments brought forward by the Damascenes reveal the tensions regarding the recruitment for positions of priesthood in the Greek Catholic Church. The reforms instituted by the patriarch challenged the privilege of a religious and lay elite which had exercised its influence on the institutions. Interestingly, many parallels can be drawn with various Ottoman institutions. One that comes to mind is the officers corps, which used to be recruited from within the military elite, but in the 19th century they were increasingly recruited from among

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[55] See the dispute regarding the election of superiors of the Chouerite and Salvatorian orders in 1843, A.E, 166/PO-Serie D/20, vol. 3, de Ségur - Lavalette, October 25th 1851.
[56] Mišāqā, *Tabrīya al-mathūm,* 42.
[57] *S.C.P.F, (S.C) Greci Melchiti,* vol. 21, p. 591, Petition of the head of the Greek Catholic nation in Damascus to Ferrieri the apostolic delegate in Istanbul. February 15th 1846.
[58] Ibid, vol. 21, p. 906, Letter of Damascenes, March 6th 1848.

the civilians, to the dismay of older officers who resented the enlargement of the profession and their loss of privilege.[59]

Salvatorians called upon both Rome and the Ottoman government against their patriarch, adapting their arguments to delegitimize him to the audience.[60] They even attempted to be recognized as a separate community by the Ottoman government.[61] This conflict demonstrates Maẓlūm's effort of centralization of power and resources which were detrimental to the monastic orders. The actors of the Greek Catholic Church did not hesitate to call upon Rome or the Ottoman government to further their positions. They knew what could be obtained from each authority and used the overlapping secular and religious jurisdiction to challenge the increasing authority of their patriarch.

The relation between the Propaganda and Maẓlūm, already fragile because of the context of his election of patriarch, was damaged by these conflicts with the Salvatorians. The internal struggle for access to resources and decision making power opened the way for delegates to intervene more directly in the affairs of the Greek Catholic Church. Yet, delegates in this period, because of their geographical location and personal idiosyncrasies often failed to grasp the role of *ʿaṣabīya*, locality and family relations in the internal struggles. They tended to interpret all actions and reactions based upon the dichotomy of obedience/rebellion towards the Pope and orthodoxy/heresy, or at least presented it as such to the Propaganda Fide.[62]

In the question of appointments and dismissals, Maẓlūm's exclusive claims over the decision-making process was not well received by the Congregation of the Propaganda Fide

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[59] For more on this subject see Levy, Avigdor, 'The Officer Corps in Sultan Mahmud II's New Ottoman Army, 1826–39", IJMES 2 (1971): 21–39.

[60] *S.C.P.F, (S.C) Greci Melchiti,* vol. 19, p. 377, Vice-consul Austria in Acre Count Palatino and agent of France in Acre Joseph Conti, July 31st 1838; Ibid, p. 378, Consul of France in Acre Henry Guys, March 6th 1838.

[61] Ibid, vol. 19, p. 399, Aftimios Mishaqa, August 14th 1838; Ibid, vol. 19, p. 439, Mazlum, September 20th 1838.

[62] Bernard Heyberger, ""Pro nunc, nihil respondendum". Recherche d'informations et prise de décision à la Propagande: l'exemple du Levant (XVIII' siècle)," in *Mélanges de l'École française de Rome. Italie et Méditerranée*, tome 109, no.2 (1997): 551.

who reminded him that Rome had the last word.[63] While the patriarch's and the Congregation's objective of hierarchization coincided, he often lost the support of the Congregation or the apostolic delegate because of his lack of recognition of the position of Rome a the top of the hierarchy.[64] His perception of his role was more in line with the prerogatives awarded to him by the Ottoman State as the head of a *millet*. Maẓlūm's claims of exclusivity over appointments were strengthened by the recognition of the Greek Catholic patriarch by the Ottoman State, in a period in which Pope Pius IX was engaged in a struggle with the secular authorities to maintain his authority over the clergy. This particular context of threat to Roman authority instructed the strong reaction of the Propaganda against the patriarch.

The Roman and Ottoman conception of the role of patriarch did not coincide. The Ottoman State considered the patriarch as the ultimate authority over the hierarchy and the laity. In the *berat* obtained by Maẓlūm in 1848, some of the articles clearly contradict the synods, especially when it came to inheritance or the hierarchy. In this *berat*, the patriarch was made into the ultimate judge of all conflicts within the community and monopolized the power to elect his subalterns. It stated that the patriarch had the authority over all the clergy and the laity and that everyone had to obey him without objections. External interference in appointments and elections was forbidden. No one could tell the patriarch which priests to appoint where.[65] These articles gave the patriarch an authority that countered the attempts, both on the part of Rome and of the monastic orders, to restrict the intervention of the patriarch in the internal administration of the bishoprics and orders.

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[63] *S.C.P.F, (S.C) Greci Melchiti,* vol.19, p. 439, Mazlum, September 20th 1838.
[64] Ibid, vol.19, p. 439, Mazlum, September 20th 1838.
[65] For a french translation of this *berat* see Hajjar, *Un lutteur infatigable,* 305-310; For an arabic translation, see Maẓlūm, *Nubḏa tārīḫīya,* 333-336. The same situation led to a schism in the Armenian catholic church, see the upcoming PhD thesis of Salim Dermarkar, "Les Puissances et la protection religieuse : les cas des Arméniens Ottomans au XIXè siècle (1808-1908)," PhD. diss., (EHESS, 2020).

In conclusion, while the history of the Christian communities during the *Tanzimat* is often narrated from the point of view of the opposition between the laity and the clergy, the examples narrated above rather point to the intertwined nature of the clergy and laity, especially when it comes to the monasteries. The factional lines were not between laymen and clergymen but rather between various clerical institutions, and involved their lay patrons. Monasteries which had been at the forefront of the community and run autonomously were now sidelined and brought under the authority of the high clergy. Locality was also an important basis of political action and loyalty. The centralizing reforms were tainted by ʿaṣabīya, as some factions were favored at the detriment of others, fostering resistance and opposition. It parallels the reactions to the Ottoman State reforms among the population, which had less to do with the dichotomy between reformers and conservatives but was rather related to the changes in the rules of access to resources. These divisions and conflicts regarding monasteries and appointments highlights the transition from a familial and local administration of Church affairs into a more centralized and top down system of management of resources, characteristic of the modern state. These divisions called for the intervention of a variety of outside actors, such as foreign consuls, missionaries, apostolic delegates and Ottoman governors who were instrumentalized in this struggle over institutional power.

2. Crystallization of Religious Identities: Charity, Persecution and Political Representation

In addition to centralizing the institutions of the Church under the secular clergy, Maẓlūm also strove to give the Greek Catholic Church a certain level of autonomy and self-determination. He did so by taking control of the influx of charity from Europe, by homogenizing his flock and bringing all Greek Catholics under his jurisdiction. The post-Egyptian period saw the crystallization of religious identities among Maronites and Druzes but also among Christian communities themselves, pointing to the wider nature of

confessionalization.[66] The influx of foreign charity contributed to the reinforcement of religious identities between Maronites and Greek Catholics and to their competition for representation and access to resources, eventually leading to acts of violence.

The Egyptian departure from *Bilād al-Šām* in 1841 changed the balance of power between Christian communities in Greater Syria. After the plunder committed by the Egyptian army in Mount Lebanon, charity that flowed from France and Austria as reparations became a tool in the strong competition between Christian communities. Conflicts between Greek Catholics and Maronites also came to the surface, as did those between Maẓlūm and the missionaries.

The position of Greek Catholics was particularly threatened because of their alliance with the Egyptians, which made them suspect of divided loyalty in the eyes of the Ottoman State. The Emir Bašīr II Šihāb, who was the patron of Greek Catholics and allied with the Egyptians, also fell in disfavor with the Ottoman State.[67] This turn of events shifted the balance of power between Christian communities and increased the rivalry between the Maronites and Greek Catholics.

Maẓlūm, fearing the change of regime, departed for Europe in 1840 to obtain political and financial support for his community.[68] He demanded from the pope the authorization to put his churches and clergy under the protection of France. He proposed that the laity would continue to remit taxes to the Ottoman government but that the clergy would be put under the direct protection of France and thus be exempt of taxes. His clergy would thereby have the same status than missionaries and Latins.[69] This proposal however was not accepted by Rome and failed to materialize.

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[66] Makdisi, *Culture of Sectarianism,* 51.

[67] He wrote to the Propaganda, declaring that when he was in charge he had always conformed to the will of the Holy See and had favored Catholics. He now asked to be granted the right to go to Rome. Yet he did not receive an answer to this request and was sent to Istanbul. *S.C.P.F, (S.C) Greci Melchiti,* vol. 20, p 430, Emir Bechir Shihab, September 24th 1841.

[68] Ibid, vol. 20, p. 290, Mazlum, January 3rd 1841.

[69] *S.C.P.F, (S.C) Greci Melchiti,* vol. 20, p. 265, Memorundum of Mazlum to the Pope, November 25th 1840.

Maẓlūm however was not set on France as the only possible protector. Given that France was in a difficult situation in the Ottoman Empire because of its support to Muḥammad ʿAlī, Maẓlūm saw Austria as another possible patron.[70] The French and Austrian consuls competed for influence in Damascus. They both gave their protection to Greek Catholics and encouraged them to write petitions in their favor to the Ottoman State to further their influence.[71]

Maẓlūm was closer to the Greek Catholics under Austrian and British protection than to those under French protection.[72] His relationship with French consuls had been damaged by his repeated conflicts with missionaries and especially French Lazarists. Then, he had come back to *Bilād al-Šām* with Jesuits, who tended to favor Austria rather than France due to their precarious position in France after the 1830 revolution and during the July Monarchy.[73] Greek Catholics under Austrian protection represented the new commercial elite who also had positions within the local administration.[74] Maẓlūm borrowed from these merchants to pay for the debts of his predecessors and the *beratlar* he had to buy to obtain his recognition by the Ottoman government.[75] During his patriarchate he had delegated some of his civil powers to these merchants employed by the Ottoman administration. At times, these merchants intervened in the religious issues of the community, thus creating a conflict of jurisdiction with the bishops.[76] They also took over the former responsibilities of the traditional elite. For

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[70] A.E., 67/CPC, Ratti-Menton-Guizot, January 27th 1842. The eventuality of Greek Catholics being protected by Austria rather than France had already been considered by Maẓlūm during his stay in Rome. Indeed in 1818, Maẓlūm had planed to ask all the bishops to make petitions demanding the protection of Austria rather than France in order to counter the persecutions they suffered at the hands of the Greek Orthodox in Damascus and other cities, Cyrille Charon, "L'Église grecque melchite catholique (Suite.)," in *Échos d'Orient*, tome 6, no.43 (1903): 384.

[71] Ibid.

[72] A.E., 67/CPC, Baron de Bourquency-Guizot, February 3rd 1842.

[73] Verdeil, *La mission jésuite,* 50, 114, 115.

[74] For example, Yūsuf Āyrūt was an Austrian protégé and later on had close relationships with the British consul Richard Wood. He was an employee of the Ottoman administration, and had been employed as a writer by Ibrāhīm Pasha. He is described by the French consul as the chief of the administration, and was indeed nominated first writer.A.E., 67/CPC, Ratti-Menton-Guizot, January 18th 1841; Ibid. Ratti-Menton-Guizot, January 25Th 1841.

[75] Hajjar, *Un lutteur infatigable,* 112.

[76] Ibid, 110.

example, in 1844, the patriarch left Ḥannā Frayǧ, an Austrian protégé, in charge of his affairs in the city. Then, when the government instituted a new tax to be paid by the Greek Catholics to the patriarch, Maẓlūm entrusted the collection of this tax to these new merchants, to the dismay of the traditional elite and the clergy.[77] He used the financial and political influence of this group to consolidate his authority.[78] Maẓlūm gave them a central role in the affairs of the community in Damascus to counter the influence of the old elite who had tight links with the monasteries and opposed his centralization efforts.

While Maẓlūm was moving towards the protection of Austria, the Maronite leadership relied heavily on the French consuls. The rivalry between these two countries thus affected negatively the relationship between Greek Catholics and Maronites. This parallel competition contributed to the politicization of both communities. The deterioration of their relationship came to light with the question of the distribution of charity from Europe. One would expect that charity coming from Catholics in Europe would favor the development of a sense of Catholic belonging. However, it actually highlighted the relevance of communal identifications and strengthened the rivalry between Catholic communities who competed for access to resources.

The way in which charity was received also added to the complicated distribution. For example, in 1848, the apostolic delegate Villardel received funds from the Pontifical Society for the Propagation of the Faith in Lyon for the bishop of Sidon and Latakia. However, it did not mention to which community it should be endowed.[79] It left apostolic delegate a large leeway in distributing funds on the ground.

In 1841, funds for the victims of the war in Mount Lebanon were sent by the Propaganda from France through the apostolic delegate and missionaries. Funds from Austria

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[77] Ibid.

[78] The French consul accused the patriarch of asking these merchants to put pressure on the Greek Catholics who had commercial links with their houses of commerce to force them to support him, A.E, 166/PO-Serie D/20, vol. 3, de Ségur-Lavalette, December 24th 1851.

[79] Ibid, vol. 21, p. 1027, Villardel, November 12Th 1848.

were also given to the Maronite patriarch. The Greek Catholic bishops of Beirut and Aleppo, Agabios Rīyāšī and Bāsil Šaīyāṭ, demanded to be paid their part as the money was directed at all victims, not just Maronite ones. However the Maronite patriarch claimed that it was directed only at Maronites. The Greek Catholic bishops explained to Rome that they also had damages to their churches and monasteries and that since the leaving of Emir Bašīr they were at the mercy of the Greek Orthodox and the Russians who obtained a *ferman* against them.[80] The apostolic delegate Villardel mentioned this issue in 1845, and argued that these funds collected from Europe to repair places of worship in Mount Lebanon had done more harm than good, because the Austrian chancellor Metternich had donated the funds for the Maronites but had also declared that it was to be distributed to all Christians. The Maronite bishop of Beirut, Ṭobīyā ʿAūn, started to spend all the funds for his community, which angered Greek Catholics, especially the bishop of Beirut, Agabios Rīyāšī. Maronites on the other hand accused the Greek Catholics of planning to use the funds to have their own governors in Mount Lebanon in order to escape the authority of the Maronites.[81] The issue of political dominance of Maronites in Mount Lebanon was intricately linked to the issue of funds distribution among communities.

In the midst of this dispute regarding the distribution of charity, the Greek Catholic bishop of Beirut Agabios Rīyāšī brought up a strong accusation against the Maronites. In a letter to the Propaganda in November 1840, he related the persecution to which he was allegedly subjected to by the Maronites. He was in the monastery of Kasarwān when twenty Maronites came to take him prisoner and plundered the monastery. They then delivered him to the Ottoman troops. They then presented some leaders of Kasarwān who accused him of some crime under false charges. The Ottoman governor thus decided to send him on a Turkish fleet to be judged in Istanbul. Fortunately, he was saved by a military leader of the Austrian

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[80] Ibid, vol. 20, p. 388, Agabios and Chayat, August 7th 1841.
[81] *S.C.P.F, (S.C) Greci Melchiti,* vol. 21, p. 338 Villardel, July 28th 1845.

fleet in Beirut. The Austrian military leader then negotiated with the Vizir and the Emir Bašīr Šihāb III to obtain his liberation and retributions for this attack. In the letter he send to the Propaganda, he accused the Maronites in general of disloyalty towards the Greek Catholics.[82] Rīyāšī received the support of Maẓlūm, who demanded that the Propaganda send orders to the Maronite patriarch for retributions.[83] The Maronite patriarch on the other hand accused Rīyāšī of misrepresenting the enmity of the Maronites against him.[84] This anecdote points to the increasing use of narratives of persecution as a way to gain access to charity from Europe, which in turn affected the rise of sectarian discourses.

The competition between Maronites and Greek Catholics revolved around access to resources and political power in Mount Lebanon. This competition created an hostile relationship between the two communities which explains their lack of mutual help in various events of violence in the Mountain. In 1841, the Greek Catholic clergy of Dayr al-Qamar complained to the Holy See that they were attacked by Druzes and that Maronites and Greek Orthodox refused to help them, leaving them defenseless.[85] Ibrahim Mišāqa together with a priest called Anṭūn Sussa wrote to the Holy See to complain about the fact that Maronites did not help them. If they had done so, they would have been able to push away the Druzes, and they would have avoided plunder.[86] This conflict also explains in part the inaction of the Maronite forces when called for help against the attackers of the predominantly Greek Catholic town of Zaḥle in 1860.[87] The influx of foreign charity, which was often used to build luxurious churches in the city, also contributed to the image of Christian wealth in the mid-19th century and turned them into targets of plunder.

3. Maẓlūm's Reverse Missionary Enterprise : the Greek Rite

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[82] Ibid, vol. 20, p. 238, Riachi, November 10th 1840.
[83] Ibid, vol. 20, p. 315, Mazlum, February 9th 1841. Ibid, p. 310, Mazlum, February 5th 1841.
[84] Ibid, vol. 20, p.369, Nicolas Murad, May 18th 1841.
[85] *S.C.P.F, (S.C) Greci Melchiti,* vol. 20, p. 474, Ibrahim Mishaqa and sacerdote Susa, November 3rd 1841.
[86] Ibid.
[87] Fawaz, *An Occasion for War,* 65.

3.1 Bringing the Flock back into the Greek Rite

Maksīmūs Maẓlūm attempted to centralize resources and impose himself as the sole intermediary with the state and foreign institutions. In the same manner, he endeavored to abolish the overlapping authorities and institutions which had given individuals some level of interstitial freedom. To do so, he tried to bring all the Greek Catholics under his jurisdiction and to sever the links with Latins and Maronites. This reverse missionary enterprise focused on the issue of religious rites.

In the end of the 18th century, the main issue which had divided missionaries on one side and the bishop of Aleppo Ğarmānūs Ādam and the patriarch Agabios II Maṭṭar on the other was the issue of rite.[88] The Holy See had maintained an official line since Benoit XIV which demanded that Oriental Catholics continue to officiate according to their own rite, in order to facilitate the entry of Orthodox into the Catholic realm. Greek Catholic were therefore now allowed to abandon the Greek rite and adopt the Latin rite.[89] However, missionaries constantly wrote to Rome exposing the difficulty of preventing Greek Catholics from adopting the Latin rite, especially before the emancipation of the Greek Catholics.[90] After numerous years living among missionaries and Latin monks, many Greek Catholics followed the mass officiated by missionaries or Maronites. In the late 18th century and early 19th century, Ğarmānūs Ādam and the patriarch Maṭṭar, demanded that Greek Catholics follow their own rite and follow mass with their own coreligionists according to the will of the Holy See.[91] Missionaries, and especially the Franciscan Terra Santa fathers[92] wrote numerous

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[88] Liturgical, theological and spiritual traditions of a particular Church.

[89] Aurelien Girard, "Nihil esse innovandum?" 346, 347.

[90] *S.C.P.F, (S.C) Greci Melchiti,* vol. 11, p. 239, Terra Santa college of Damascus to Father Cotmi, July 21st 1800.

[91] Ibid, vol. 11, p. 337, patriarch Matar and three other members of the community, July 23rd 1802.

[92] Ibid, vol. 11, p. 128, Document entitled "Riflessione sopra l'instruzione di Monsg. Germano Adami intorno al sagramento della gresima", March 25th 1800.

complaints to Rome denouncing Ğarmānūs Ādam's heretical ideas, which also aimed at delegitimizing his attempt to challenge their jurisdiction over the Greek Catholics.[93]

Patriarch Maẓlūm built on the efforts of Ğarmānūs Ādam to make all Greek Catholics follow the Greek rite which became the terrain of Maẓlūm's reform program. Maẓlūm used printing to homogenize of ritual literature and to bring the Greek Catholic back into the Greek rite. He printed Greek Messale in Arabic and demanded that every clergy member adopt it in the mass. Publishing homogeneous mass and ritual literature was a way to ensure homogeneity among the clergy and to compete with the influence of the Latin's publications.[94]

Bringing back all Greek Catholics into the Greek rite would have two consequences: the creation of new parishes, the ordination of new priests and bishops, and an influx of resources into the church through donations during the mass. Missionaries were to be sidelined by this process, and to loose their influence and their pool of local resources. Unsurprisingly, various missionaries opposed this 'Greek' missionary effort of Maẓlūm. They started to accusing him of mismanagement, of ordaining too many priests, of wanting power and influence, and of opposing Rome through opposing Franciscan and Lazarist missionaries. They also brought forward successive accusations of mismanagement of funds, corruption or sexual misconduct against his appointed vicars.[95]

After the missionaries, Maẓlūm and some of his bishops attempted to sever the links of Greek Catholics with Maronites. They resented Maronites' influence over their flock through the blurry borders between institutions of both communities. The patriarch forbade Greek Catholic to confess with Maronite priests. The influence of Maronite priests was

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[93] See various letters in *S.C.P.F, (S.C) Greci Melchiti,* vol. 11, p. 130-230.
[94] *S.C.P.F, (S.C) Greci Melchiti,* vol. 20, p. 191, Mazlum, June 24th 1840; Regarding the Greek messale see Chirbel Nassif, "L'Euchologe Melkite depuis Malatios Karamé (†1635) jusqu'à nos jours, Les enjeux des évolutions d'un livre liturgique," PhD diss., (Institut catholique de Paris. Faculté de théologie et de sciences religieuses, 2017).
[95] *S.C.P.F, (S.C) Greci Melchiti,*vol. 20, p. 17, Mussabini, 1840; Ibid, p. 191, Mussabini, June 25th 1840.

problematic in the eyes of the patriarch because it challenged his objective of centralization by providing an alternative to the Greek Catholic clergy's authority and spiritual influence.[96] Then, conversion between the two sects became the terrain of tensions between the two high clergies, and they increasingly sought to forbid it.[97] Overlapping religious belonging became problematic during the *Tanzimat* period, both for the Ottoman government and for the religious leadership. It led to the reinforcement of religious borders, referred to as a process of confessionalization.

Some Greek Catholic notables, faced with the increasing power of an independent secular clergy over which their influence was limited, asked Rome the right to pass to the Latin rite. The adoption of the Latin rite had political consequences as it meant that the individual could obtain French protection.[98] The adoption of the Latin rite would also allow them to create marriage alliances with influential families abroad. The notables argued that they had always followed the Latin rite because of their marital links to Latins and the absence of a Greek Catholic priest in their region. Because the Greek rite relied on the Julian calendar while the Latin rite used the Gregorian calendar, following the Greek Catholic rite would have prevented the joint celebration of holidays with Latins.[99] Even in cities with a Greek Catholic clergy, some rich notables also resented the injunction of following the Greek rite and wished to continue to attend the missionary churches. The apostolic delegates supported these arguments. However, to the dismay of the missionaries, the Propaganda did not accept the change of rite of these individuals because of the synod which declared the

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[96] Ibid, vol. 20, p. 203, Agabios Riachi, July 16th 1840; Ibid, vol. 18, p. 246, Letter signed by priests to the bishop of Aleppo Basil Chayat, February 12th 1834.
[97] Ibid, vol. 20, p. 203, Agabios Riachi, July 16th 1840.
[98] Ibid, vol. 21, p. 59, Apostolic delegate, June 24th 1844.
[99] *S.C.P.F, (S.C) Greci Melchiti,* vol. 20, p. 270, Mussabini, October 13th 1840; For example, a member of the Anhouri family living in Leghorn whose mother was Latin asked to adopt the Latin rite with his family, Ibid, vol. 21, p. 51, Michelle Anhuri to Brunelli, May 28th 1844.

integrity of the rites.[100] Franciscan missionaries constantly wrote to Rome exposing the difficulty of applying this line of conduct.[101]

In the wake of numerous demands from Greek Catholics to become or remain Latins, Maẓlūm blamed the missionaries and accused them of wanting to turn his flock Latin. He suspected them of wanting to have jurisdiction over his flock. The Ottoman State's recognition of Maẓlūm in the 1840's had given him a stronger legitimacy to defend his interests against missionaries and the apostolic delegate. The apostolic delegated Villardel responded that those rich families turning Latin only did so to escape the authority of Maẓlūm whose behavior they despised.[102] Because of the intertwining of religious practice, jurisdiction and identification dynamics, rites became the locus of the struggle between Maẓlūm, missionaries and the Maronites. It also brought into question the basis of membership into the Greek Catholic community. Was it a matter of rituals, identity, family or belief?

Conversion and adoption of the Latin rite was used by various Greek Catholics as a tool to escape the increasing clerical authority of the high clergy, reinforced by the Ottoman reforms. These two prerogatives raised popular opposition in in 1852 in the Maydān neighborhood of Damascus. A conflict erupted between partisans of the patriarch on the one side and those who opposed him on the other. The patriarch went to the Maydān, judged the issue and gave orders regarding the punishments. However, this decision was not respected. Those he considered guilty, together with the French consul, accused Maẓlūm of usurping the role of the governor.[103] This accusation points to the increasing role of the patriarch even in civil affairs, reinforced by his *berat*.[104] One of the patriarch's opponents was arrested by the

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[100] *S.C.P.F, Index delle Lettere,* vol. 331, p. 509, Propaganda Fide to Michelle Anhuri, July 4th 1844.
[101] *S.C.P.F, (S.C) Greci Melchiti,* vol. 11, p. 239, Terra Santa college of Damascus to Father Cotmo, July 21st 1800.
[102] Ibid, vol. 21, p. 18, Villardel, February 4th 1844.
[103] A.E, 166/PO-Serie D/20, vol. 3, de Ségur- Ministre Plénipotentaire, January 28th 1852.
[104] Ibid, vol. 19, p. 39, Gregorio Chayat, January 5th 1836.

governor. His allies accused Maẓlūm of being the instigator of this imprisonment. In protest, five family heads of the neighborhood went to the Latin convent of Terra Santa and asked to be admitted into the Latin rite. However, they met with a refusal. They then went to the Greek Orthodox patriarch and asked to be accepted into his Church. He agreed and promised them that a church would be built for them with the financing of the Russian consulate.[105] The French consul, alarmed by this event, convinced these five individuals to change their mind. Afterwards, they started to attend the mass at the Terra Santa convent although they could not officially become Latin.[106] In retribution, Maẓlūm threatened with excommunication any Greek Catholic who would confess with the missionaries.**[107]**

Given the divisions within the Greek Catholic church and the increasing authority given to the clergy, the demands to become Latin increased exponentially during this period.[108] It came from the notables but also from the less wealthy who resented his fiscal reforms and increased taxation.[109] The aforementioned conflict in the Maydān[110] was triggered by the collection of taxes. In 1847, Maẓlūm obtained the right to collect taxes directly from the Greek Catholics. The *ferman* also gave him the responsibility to arrest those who refused to pay and to keep them imprisoned until their case was examined.[111] Maẓlūm thus became an intermediary of the state and a fiscal agent. This new role, which had previously been assumed by the notables created discontent among them. It also led to tensions with the less well off Greek Catholics because of his increased taxation and ostentatious spending, which was not to the liking of the old elite but also of the poor among

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[105] A.E, 166/PO-Serie D/20, vol. 3, de Ségur- Ministre Plénipotentaire, January 28th 1852.
[106] Ibid.
[107] A.E, 166/PO-Serie D/20, vol. 3, Barbet de Jouy- Lavalette, January 21st 1852.
[108] *S.C.P.F, (S.C) Greci Melchiti,* vol. 22, p. 621, Members of the Awra and Bahri family, October 1st 1850. Ibid, p. 248, Guiseppe Bahri, November 21st 1850.
[109] Ibid, vol. 19, p. 337, Gregorio Chayat, May 30Th 1838; Ibid, vol. 19, p. 357, Inhabitants Ğbayl and Batrun, July 5th 1838.
[110] See the map of the city of Damascus in Annex 1.
[111] *S.C.P.F, (S.C) Greci Melchiti,* vol. 21, p. 602, Mazloum, April 15th 1847.

the Greek Catholics.[112] A parallel can be drawn with the increased taxation coupled with the increased consumption and lavish lifestyle of Sultan Abdülmecid, which caused resentments and a feeling of fiscal injustice among the Ottoman subjects.[113] The large Greek Catholic community of the Maydān was less wealthy than their counterpart in the city center, where foreign protégés resided.[114] Maẓlūm's allies among the elite were under foreign protection and thus could escape taxation while leaving the lower and middle class Greek Catholic to bear the burden of the tax. The adoption of the Latin rite was thus increasingly used both by the elite and the poor to escape taxation and clerical authority.

Together with bringing all the Greek Catholic into the Greek rite, Maẓlūm also attempted to control religious confraternities,[115] an important tool of power among all communities in the Ottoman Empire. Indeed, the influence of confraternities was another obstacle to the centralization objectives of Maẓlūm. They created links of solidarity and loyalty that could be manipulated by bishops and the high clergy, or could compete with their authority, especially because missionaries were often involved. Confraternities could be used to build a power base to gain access to high positions. These confraternities provided a link between the clergy and the notables.

Latin confraternities had been created in the 17th century in Damascus and Aleppo and had caused conflicts with the Greek Catholic high clergy.[116] During Maẓlūm's rule, the confraternity of the Sacred Heart in Aleppo became the locus of power struggles with

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[112] Ibid, vol. 19, p. 337, Gregorio Chayat, May 30Th 1838; Ibid, vol. 19, p.357, Inhabitants Ğbayl and Batrun, July 5th 1838.
[113] A.E., 18/PO/A, vol. 9, Outrey-Lallemand, July 20th 1859.
[114] BOA, ML.VRD.CMH.D.253, 1853;
[115] Pious voluntary association of Christian laity, for charitable or spiritual purposes.
[116] *S.C.P.F, (S.C) Greci Melchiti,* vol. 11, p. 257, Letter patriarch Agabios Mattar, May 1800; Ibid, vol. 11, p. 277, patriarch Agabios Mattar, November 17th 1801; *S.C.P.F, (S.C) Greci Melchiti,* vol. 11, p. 337, patriarch Agabios Mattar, July 23rd 1802. Heyberger, "Individualism," 80-83. See the affair regarding the Maronite confraternity of the Sacred Heart led by Hindiyya al-ʿUjaimi in the 18th century, in Heyberger, *Hindiyya.*

missionaries but also within the Greek Catholic community.[117] The high clergy attempted to control the confraternities and to sever their links with Latins.[118]

3.2 Greek Catholic Patriarch of the Orient

Maẓlūm as the first officially recognized Greek Catholic patriarch wished not only to bring back latinizing Greek Catholics into the Greek rite but also to exert his jurisdiction over his flock even in places where there was no Greek catholic clergy. To do so, he nominated numerous bishops and sent them to territories which had been managed by the missionaries.[119] This challenge to missionary influence met with a strong opposition. Maẓlūm in 1837 decided to name his protégé and patriarchal vicar Macārīyūs Ṣammān as bishop of Diyarbakir because some Greek Orthodox had become Catholic in the city.[120]

Afterwards, Maẓlūm attempted to settle his authority in Istanbul. The Greek Catholics in the city used to celebrate the mass with the Latins. Maẓlūm, through his vicar Macārīyūs Ṣammān, asked the Propaganda to have his own public orator and to be given jurisdiction over his flock in the city, who originated from the regions under his rule.[121] In order to reach his goal, Maẓlūm also demanded the help of the Ottoman government to support his authority against missionaries.[122] However, he failed to obtain an answer from the Holy See.[123] According to the Roman conception, there could only be one Catholic bishop in each bishopric. While in other regions, Rome had to allow the presence of various Catholic bishops, it refused the extension of this practice to Smyrna and Istanbul, which had always been under

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[117] *S.C.P.F, (S.C) Greci Melchiti,* vol. 17, p. 18, patriarch Ignatius Qattan, February 1st 1830; Similar to the affair of the Maronite Hindiyya al-'Ujaimi and the confraternity of the Sacred Heart in the 18th century described by Bernard Heyberger, *Hindiyya.*

[118] Ibid, vol. 19, p. 223, Gregorio Chayat, August 20th 1837.

[119] *S.C.P.F, (S.C) Greci Melchiti,* vol. 20, p. 17, Summary of letters sent to the Holy See regarding Mazlum, January 1840.

[120] Maẓlūm, *Nubḏa,* 32.

[121] *S.C.P.F, (S.C) Greci Melchiti,* vol. 20, p. 17, Summary of letters sent to the Holy See regarding Mazlum, January 1840; Ibid, vol. 20, p. 238, Mazlum, November 10th 1840.

[122] Ibid, vol. 20, p. 17, Summary of letters sent to the Holy See regarding Mazlum, January 1840.

[123] Ibid.

the authority of a Latin representative.[124] The Propaganda confirmed in 1846 that Greek Catholics in Istanbul were under the jurisdiction of the Latins, in the absence of a Greek Catholic bishopric of Istanbul.[125]

Macārīyūs Ṣammān, after being unable to complete his mission in Istanbul, set out to Smyrna. He wanted to extend his jurisdiction over the Greek Catholics of the city, who in the absence of a bishop, had been going to the church of the Latins.[126] Antonio Mussabini, the Latin archbishop of Diyarbakir claimed that Macārīyūs Ṣammān started to celebrate masses in private houses and refused to obey him. Macārīyūs Ṣammān also officiated celebrations according to the Julian calendar while in Smyrna the Gregorian calendar was followed.[127] The calendar was an important marker of ritual distinction between Greek Catholics and Latins, and was used a tool to bring back the Greek Catholic into the Greek rite by marking a separation in the celebration of holy days.[128]

The archbishop of Smyrna, Antonio Mussabini, accused Maẓlūm of wishing to extend his jurisdiction over the Greek Catholics in the whole Orient, and that his pretension in using the title: *patriarch of Alexandria, Antioch and Jerusalem* was already exaggerated and illegitimate.[129] This suspicion towards Maẓlūm was encouraged by his behavior, indeed Maẓlūm was so set up upon bringing all the Greek Catholics under his authority that he looked beyond the borders of the Empire towards Europe but also towards India. He deplored the situation of the Aleppine Greek Catholics merchants in Calcutta, who did not have an Arabic speaking priest and had to do communion with missionaries. He announced to the

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[124] Ibid, vol. 20, p. 614, Villardel, April 5th 1842.
[125] Ibid.
[126] Ibid, vol. 20, p. 191, Antonio Mussabini, June 25th 1840; Ibid, vol. 20, p. 270, Antonio Musabini, October 13th 1840.
[127] Ibid.
[128] Ibid, vol. 20, p. 270, Antonio Mussabini, October 13th 1840. Maẓlūm then sent Macārīyūs Ṣammān to impose his will on the bishopric of Aleppo and obtain the election of his favorite, Mīḫāʾīl Ānṭakī, to the bishop's seat. The current bishop or Aleppo, Bāsil Šaīyāṭ, strongly resented this attempt to replace him. *S.C.P.F, (S.C) Greci Melchiti,* vol. 20, p. 24, Melchites in Aleppo, January 1840; Ibid, vol. 20, p. 409, Villardel, September 23rd 1842; Ibid, vol. 21, p. 123, Mazlum, September 25th 1844.
[129] *S.C.P.F, (S.C) Greci Melchiti,* vol. 20, p. 270, Antonio Mussabini, October 13th 1840.

Propaganda that they demanded from him a priest to whom they could confess in their own language. He asked to the Propaganda the authorization to send a Greek Catholic priest who could officiate in the church of the Latins, together with receiving a subsidy from the Propaganda and would have jurisdiction over all the Arabic speaking Catholics in the city, regardless of their rite.[130] This demand of jurisdiction over Indian Greek Catholics pointed to the ambitions of Maẕlūm and his self-perception as the patriarch of all Greek Catholics in the world.

It also points to the ongoing globalization, with Greek Catholics travelling beyond their places of origin. This phenomenon, already present in the 18th century with the development of a Greek Catholic diaspora in Europe was accentuated in the 19th century. This diaspora was usually quite wealthy and influential which encouraged the patriarch to try to bring them back into his fold.

This self-perception as patriarch of the whole Orient was encouraged by the jurisdiction incrementally given to him by the Ottoman State, which was larger than his ecclesiastical jurisdiction. Indeed, after his trip in Europe, Maẕlūm had collected enough funds to go to Istanbul and buy a *ferman* from the Ottoman government[131] In 1844, with the emancipation from the Armenian Catholic patriarch, he obtained the recognition of his religious authority. In 1848, he also obtained the civil authority over the Greek Catholics and had thereby the full jurisdiction over all aspects of the Greek Catholic communities in the empire. This understanding of the jurisdiction of the patriarchs in terms of communities, conflicted with the territorial conception of the Holy See based upon patriarchal seats. Maẕlūm understood the stakes of the rites and endeavored to create a clear distinction between Latins and Greek Catholics, to delimit his flock through ritual distinction, to assert his authority as defined by the Ottoman State. The fact that the jurisdiction offered by the

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[130] Ibid, vol. 20, p. 185, Mazlum, June 12th 1840.
[131] Ibid, vol. 20, p. 491, Mazlum, December 7th 1841.

Ottoman Empire was more advantageous than the one proposed by the Propaganda in part explain his bold attitude against the apostolic delegates and missionaries. Then, this shift from a conception of jurisdiction based on territory to a jurisdiction based on communities contributed to the development a greater Greek Catholic community across the empire. The recognition by the Ottoman government and the efforts at centralization widened the imagined geography of the community.

Maẓlūm's rule was marked by the attempt to carve a place for his community among Catholics in the Ottoman Empire. To foster self-determination and independence from other Catholic institutions, he had to sever links with Maronites and Latins and to emphasize separation and ritual distinction, participating in the confessionalization of these communities. These endeavors encountered the opposition of missionaries and Maronites but also of notables among his own flock. These struggles for influence and access to resources called for outside intervention into the administration of the Greek Catholic Church, complicating the task of institutionalizing the *millet* and contributing to the politicization of the flock.

4. Maẓlūm's Reforms Contested: ʿAṣabīya, Factionalism and Patronage

Maẓlūm reforms fostered resentments from the monastic orders, apostolic delegates, the laity and other actors of the Greek Catholic church who had previously enjoyed a certain level of autonomy from the high clergy. However, from the end of the 1840's, the main opponents to Maẓlūm centralization program came from within those who seemed to have benefited the most from the hierarchization of the Church: the high clergy. Indeed, Maẓlūm institutionalized the Church by relying on his own protégés and using the existing factionalism based on local identities and family networks. His reliance on his protégés caused the resentment of other bishops who entered into an open conflict with their patriarch. In reaction, Maẓlūm further attempted to increase his own authority at the expense of the high clergy. The political strategies of both parties favored foreign and Ottoman intervention into

the internal affairs of the Greek Catholic Church. The *millet* was at the center of a struggle for sovereignty between foreign powers, Rome and the Ottoman State.

The opposition of the bishops materialized in 1849 during the synod of Jerusalem in which Maẓlūm gave a wider authority to the patriarch over the administration of the bishoprics.[132] The debates which underlined most of the sessions of this synod deepened the divisions among the high clergy and increased the hostility of some bishops towards the patriarch. It also had repercussions among the population leading Maẓlūm to forbid Greek Catholics from discussing the decisions taken regarding ecclesiastical matters.[133] The theological and doctrinal debates, which had previously been restricted to the clerical circles were increasingly taken into the open and caused disputes among the population, pointing to the development of popular religious mobilization.

Some bishops were discontented by the policies of their patriarch because he clearly favored his patriarchal vicars at the expense of bishops. Almost all the bishops ordained by Maẓlūm[134] had not originated from a monastic order and were chosen as vicars and then ordained as bishops. They had thus by-passed the traditional route of clerical appointments and elections within the Church, rendering them illegitimate in the eyes of the other bishops who were angered by the use of Church charity to maintain them. The bishops also criticized Maẓlūm for his use of the bishoprics' revenue to reimburse his spending done for the construction of churches. All these measures reduced the revenue of bishops and challenged their authority in their bishopric.[135]

The major point of contention that arose during the synod of Jerusalem was that Maẓlūm decided to restructure the territorial division of the various bishoprics. He divided the

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[132] Hajjar, *Un lutteur infatigable*, 123; *S.C.P.F, (S.C) Greci Melchiti,* vol. 22, p. 89, unknown author, June 1849.
[133] A.E, 166/PO-Serie D/20,vol.3, Segur-Aspik, March 13th 1851.
[134] Including Bāsil Šaīyāṭ, the bishop of Zaḥle, Macārīyūs Ṣammān, the bishop of Diyarbakir, Bāsil Kfūrī, his patriarchal vicar in Egypt, Aṯanāsīyūs Tūtunğī, the bishop of Tripoli and Kīrlis Fasfūs, the bishop of Bosra.
[135] *S.C.P.F, (S.C) Greci Melchiti,* vol. 21, p. 1027, Villardel, November 12th 1848. 12 nov 1848.

existing bishoprics in order to create new ones for his patriarchal vicars.[136] This step arose the opposition of the bishops who resented the territorial reorganization of Maẕlūm. It was composed of the archbishop of Tyre and the bishops of Baalbek and Beirut (Kārūt, ʿUbayd and Rīyāšī).[137] They appealed to Rome to limit the authority of the patriarch over the bishops.[138]

Maksīmūs Maẕlūm has come to embody the figure of the reformer, who sought to modernize the administration of his Church and rescue it from a variety of internal and external threats.[139] Beyond the questionable dichotomy of reformer and conservative which informed much of the scholarship on the Ottoman Empire during the *Tanzimat*,[140] the strife which resulted from these various reforms should also be seen as the result of conflicting claims of access to resources rather than personal attitudes towards modernization. Indeed, the objectives of the reforms functioned as discourses mobilized in the competition over social, political and economical gains.[141] The new institutions of the Greek Catholic Church, rather than downplaying the solidarities and identifications based on ʿaṣabīyā, were rather instrumentalized by Maẕlūm as new tools of power within the same logic of social interactions.[142] As Pierre Bourdieu argues when a discourse of power is created, it leaves room for interpretation of this discourse, especially when the structures of power are not well established.[143]

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[136] Hajjar, *Un lutteur infatigable,* 156; Pichon, *Maaloula,* 20-30; Haïssa Boustani, "Les évêques de Sidnaïa" in: *Échos d'Orient*, tome 7, no.47 (1904), 215; Cyrille Charon, "Le Concile melkite de Jérusalem en 1849" in *Échos d'Orient*, tome 10, no.62, (1907): 27.

[137] Hajjar, *Un lutteur infatigable*, 108.

[138] De Clercq, *Histoire des conciles*, 412.

[139] The narrative presented by Joseph Hajjar in *Un lutteur infatigable* illustrates this dynamic.

[140] See criticism of this dichotomy in Oliver Bouquet, "Is it Time to Stop Speaking about Ottoman Modernisation?" in *Order and Compromise: Government Practices in Turkey from the Late Ottoman Empire to the early 21st century,* ed. Marc Aymes, Benjamin Gourisse and Elise Massicard, (Boston: Brill, 2015), 53.

[141] See a similar dynamic in the case of the Maronite Patriarch Yūsuf Istifān, Bernard Heyberger, *Hindiyya*, p. 192 – 193.

[142] Heyberger, "Confréries," 240.

[143] Pierre Bourdieu, *Pascalian Meditations,* trans. Richard Nice (Stanford: Polity Press, 2000), 236.

Faced with the strong opposition of the bishop of Beirut, Agabios Rīyāšī, and his attempts to delegitimize him by writing to the Propaganda, Maẓlūm wrote to Rome accusing him of various crimes and embezzlement of ecclesiastical property. He asked to demote him from his position of bishop.[144] In 1851, the Propaganda saw the internal divisions of the Greek Catholics and predicted a problem of succession in case Maẓlūm died. The Propaganda thus decided to appoint the metropolitan of Tyre Archbishop Iġnāṭīyūs Kārūt as an apostolic vicar after the death of Maẓlūm so that no patriarch would be appointed without the participation of Rome. The archbishop of Tyre was one of the opponents of Maẓlūm within the clergy. Rumors circulated that the Holy See wanted to replace Maẓlūm while he was still alive.[145] Nine priests in Damascus already pledged allegiance to the archbishop of Tyre.[146] These rumors created a scandal in the community as it was seen as an unacceptable intervention of Rome into the election process of the Greek Catholic Church. Seeing these reactions, the Propaganda sent a following letter to show that it was a misunderstanding and that the archbishop of Tyre had falsified the translation to make it seem like the letter gave him the right to claim the patriarchate.[147] It was too late however for a complete denial of the charges and this letter of the Propaganda was not taken into consideration.[148]

The division of the community between two camps was sealed by this event. Maẓlūm obtained the support of the Ottoman government, while the bishops opposed to him turned to French consuls and the apostolic delegate. The willingness of the French consul to intervene can be understood by the foreign policy of the French empire. Indeed, the French emperor Napoleon III had established the alliance of the army and the Catholic Church and had intervened in favor of the Pope against the Roman Republic in 1848. Then, on a more local

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[144] *S.C.P.F, (S.C) Greci Melchiti,* vol. 22, p. 53, Mazloum, June 17th 1849; Ibid, vol. 22, Mazloum, June 20th 1849.

[145] Hajjar, *Un lutteur infatigable*, 240.

[146] A.E, 166/PO-Serie D/20, vol. 3, Ségur-Ministre Plenipotentaire, June 10th 1851.

[147] *S.C.P.F, (S.C) Greci Melchiti,* p. 1053, Franzoni to bishop of Tyre, March 11th 1851.

[148] Fake letters often circulated in Bilad al Sham, creating commotions and upheaval. For example, in 1852 a fake letter by Agabios circulated saying that Maẓlūm had agreed with the Greek Orthodox and had given up the obedience to the Pope, *S.C.P.F, (S.C) Greci Melchiti,* P 62, vol 23, Paolo Hatem, 2 mars 1852

level, the French consuls' main protégés among Greek Catholics were opposed to the patriarch and were close to the Salvatorian order.[149]

However, not all French consuls supported the bishops opposed to the patriarch. Each consul had his own perspective in this affair. The French consul of Beirut, Gabriel de Lesparda, sided with Maẓlūm.[150] He reported that the majority of the population under his jurisdiction sided with Maẓlūm and only a minority with the bishop of Beirut, Rīyāšī.[151] The two consuls of France did not support the same actors, as their local context differed and encouraged them to protect those who could serve their influence.

Each side attempted to obtain the most signature for their petitions crafted to support their side of the story to Rome.[152] Each side wanted to show that the majority was with them. The petitions sent to Rome had previously been signed by a few individuals, mostly notables or members of the clergy, but in this period one can observe the shift towards a quantitative approach to petitioning which contributed to the politicization of the population.

The patriarch felt that the situation was becoming difficult for him given his conflictual relationship with Rome and the enmity of foreign consuls and missionaries. He thus tried to improve his image in the eyes of Rome by making petitions in his favor.[153] He also proved his orthodoxy by making sermons praising Rome during the mass.[154] Yet, his attempts did not bear fruit and the apostolic delegate took the side of Bishop Rīyāšī, the most vocal of his opponents. Rīyāšī used the influence of the missionaries, French consuls and the apostolic delegate to defend his autonomy vis à vis Maẓlūm and to check on his authority. Maẓlūm thus turned towards the Ottoman government for help in imposing his authority. He mandated Necip Paşa, the governor of Damascus in the early 1840's who was now in Istanbul,

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[149] Antoine Rabbath, *Documents inédits pour servir à l'histoire du Christianisme en Orient*, Tome 1 (London: Luzac & Co., 1905), 159.
[150] Ibid, 133.
[151] *S.C.P.F, (S.C) Greci Melchiti,* Vol. 22, p. 1066, French consul Beirut, August 5th 1851.
[152] A.E, 166/PO-Serie D/20, vol. 3, Ségur-Ministre Plénipotentaire, June 25th 1851; Ibid, Ségur-Aspik, March 13th 1851.
[153] A.E, 166/PO-Serie D/20, vol. 3, Ségur- Ministre Plénipotentaire, June 25th 1851.
[154] Ibid.

to complain against Rīyāšī to the Ottoman government and to obtain his dismissal from his position. Since his passage in Damascus, Necip Paşa's secretary was the Greek Catholic Yūsuf ʿAyrūṭ, close to the Austrian consul.[155] ʿAyrūṭ helped Maẓlūm against the apostolic delegate and Rīyāšī by using Necip Pasha's influence in Istanbul.[156] Maẓlūm knew which angle to present in order to bring the case to the Ottoman courts. Indeed, he accused Rīyāšī of disposing of ecclesiastical property, of various immoral acts, and of lacking loyalty to the Ottoman government.[157] He criticized Rīyāšī for obeying only Rome, and disobeying the laws of the country.[158] Maẓlūm's call upon the Ottoman authorities in this affair was not well received by Rome. Rīyāšī accused his patriarch of betrayal towards Roman authority.[159] He called for the intervention of Giuseppe Valerga who was both the apostolic delegate and the Latin patriarch of Jerusalem. In turn, the opponents of Rīyāšī denounced him to the governor and characterized this call upon the apostolic delegate as a rebellion against the Ottoman authorities.[160] The never-ending accusations of political and spiritual betrayal point to the politicization of the Greek Catholic community. The conflicts between the two sides spread beyond clerical realms as it led to violence among the flock in Beirut.[161]

These conflicts highlight the increasing politicization of the Greek Catholic community and the overlapping jurisdictions which were increasingly problematic in the 19th century. Foreign and Ottoman interventions into the affairs of the Greek Catholics were encouraged by the nature of the factional struggles and the calls upon external authorities to give more weight to campaigns of delegitimization of opponents. The hierarchy of the

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[155] ʿAyrūṭ was an Austrian protégé and had been instrumental against French influence in Damascus in the 1840's. He was the nephew of Malātīyūs Fandī, Maẓlūm's patriarchal vicar.
[156] *S.C.P.F, (S.C) Greci Melchiti,* vol. 22, p. 1152, vol 22, Amin Shilbli Chmayl, October 10th 1851. He was the representative of Rīyāšī in Istanbul.
[157] Ibid, vol. 23, .p 11, Agabios, January 3rd 1852.
[158] Ibid, vol. 23, p. 15, Villardel, March 10th 1852.
[159] Ibid, vol. 23, p. 11, Agabios, January 3rd 1852.
[160] Ibid, vol. 23, p. 175, Valerga, June 5th 1852.
[161] Ibid.

non-Muslim communities became an additional battleground for international struggle for influence.[162]

In the end, Maẓlūm resorted to use the population to get rid of Rīyāšī. In 1851, the population of Mount Lebanon and Beirut sent a petition to the government asking to replace Rīyāšī because he was selling the waqf of the bishopric which they claimed were the goods of the nation.[163] As a response the Ottoman authorities recalled his *berat* for failing to maintain social peace.[164] In this case the bishop was thus considered as another intermediary such as a governor, a council member, a tax collector, who could be appointed and dismissed depending on their ability to manage their constituents, obtain taxation and ensure social peace. This dynamic reveals that the same logic that was applied to the appointments of civil servants were now also applied to the religious hierarchy. This is one of the consequence of the institution of the *millet* system, in which the clergy was placed under the overview of the state.

The use of popular will to delegitimize a bishop was problematic for Rome. Indeed, in the Roman perspective, popular will was not a legitimate basis of decision-making. Obedience to superiors (bishops, patriarch) amounted to obedience to Jesus. Thus, the population was not to be consulted in ecclesiastical matters.[165] This was not surprising given the context of Roman Catholicism in the 19th century. In the face of political turmoil in Europe and the rise of nationalist movements, the authority of the clergy was threatened in an unprecedented manner. The Roman revolution had posed an unprecedented threat to the authority of the Pope and was put down in a bloodbath in 1849. Similar demands based on the

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[162] Similar developments are observed among Catholic Armenians and Chaldeans. For Armenians see Frazee, *Catholics and Sultans*, 186-187; Mariam Kartashyan, "Ultramontane Efforts in the Ottoman Empire during the 1860s and 1870s." *Studies in Church History* 54 (2018): 345–58; See also the upcoming thesis of Salim Dermarkar at the Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales (EHESS).
[163] *S.C.P.F, (S.C) Greci Melchiti,* vol. 23, p. 271, Letter of Greek nation to Lesparda Consul general of France in Beirut, April 1st 1852.
[164] Hajjar, *Un lutteur infatigable,* 243; A.E, 166/PO-Serie D/20, vol. 3, Ségur-Aspik, Annex 1, October 25th 1851.
[165] *S.C.P.F, (S.C) Greci Melchiti,* vol. 25, p. 379, Valerga-Agabios, Feburary 23rd 1859.

notion of popular will among Ottoman Christians were seen with suspicion and worries by the apostolic delegates.[166]

The Holy See's main basis of law was revelation and obedience to the Pope. In the first part of the 19th century, the concept of the infallibility of the Pope was reinforced as the main basis of dogma.[167] The authority of the Pope was theorized as monarchic and sovereign in the writings of Roman school in the end of the 18th century and beginning of the 19th century. According to the Roman dogma, obedience to the patriarch was encouraged if the patriarch was obeying the Pope.[168] In this case also the patriarch was seen as an intermediary. Decision power and authority belonged to Rome, and this authority was then awarded to the patriarch, the bishops and the priests. The Holy See could thus deprive a clergy member of his role of intermediary in case he did not respect the canons.

The recall of Rīyāšī's *berat* was seen by many as an unlawful intervention of the state in ecclesiastical affairs. Rīyāšī obtained the Maronite patriarch, together with the vicar of the Armenian patriarch as well as some Syrian Catholic bishops to accuse Maẓlūm of having violated the cannons of the Church by applying to the Ottoman government regarding ecclesiastical goods.[169] This conflict brought to light the confusion that existed regarding the border between civil and religious realms. The institutionalization of the *millet* system, together with the creation of councils and the attribution of salaries to clergy members, did reinforce the legitimacy of the patriarch as a state actor. Maẓlūm was given both the secular and spiritual authority over his flock. However, the *millet* system also brought the administration of the community under the purview of the state. The high clergy was chosen by the patriarch or elected by a council and then certified by the Holy See. In addition to that

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[166] Ibid, vol. 25, p. 393,Valerga-Chargé d'affaire, April 4th 1859.

[167] Jean-François Chiron " « Une barrière éternelle. » L'autorité de l'Église dans la définition du dogme au XIXe siècle," *Recherches de Science Religieuse* 94, no. 1(2006): 10, 11.

[168] Such as Pietro Ballerini, Zaccaria, Muzzarelli, Mamachi, Cappellari, Ibid, 23.The infallibility of the Pope was later consecrated during the Council Vatican I. However, it was opposed by Oriental patriarchs.

[169] A.E, 166/PO-Serie D/20, vol. 3, Barbet de Jouy-Lavalette, January 21st 1852.

spiritual legitimacy, they obtained a civil legitimacy through receiving an official *berat,* which allowed them to collect taxes. In order to defend themselves against the Greek Orthodox clergy, the Greek Catholics were eager to receive a *berat* from the government. However, it also meant that the Ottoman government could have a say in ecclesiastical affairs. An order from Istanbul could demote a clergy member of his *berat*, as Rīyāšī witnessed. However, it did not take away his spiritual legitimacy. The conflict between Rīyāšī and Maẓlūm thus illustrates the overlapping of jurisdictions and the blurry border separating religious from civil matters. In the end, both Maẓlūm and Rīyāšī were called to Rome regarding their dispute in January 1852.[170] Although he received several pressing invitations to come to Rome, he did no cooperate and died not long after.[171]

In conclusion, Maẓlūm's patriarchate was marked by a will to reform the institutions of the Greek Catholic church towards a centralization of resources and an attempt to increase the jurisdiction of the clergy over the flock. Through this process, he sought to homogenize practices and rites, to emphasize separation from other Catholics. He sought to move away from a patrimonial management of the Church in line with Roman and Ottoman objectives. The attempt to build an exclusive confessional culture through ritual and religious distinction conflicted with existing forms of belonging, either within the community or beyond. It challenged the overlapping institutions and jurisdictions which had allowed Greek Catholic individuals some level of interstitial freedom, thus giving rise to numerous resistances. To operate this centralization of the Church, he relied on his own protégés, thus giving strength to the dynamic of ʿaṣabīya[172] and factionalism. It led to opposition from those who had previously benefited from access to power. The conflicts which took place encouraged outside intervention into the affairs of the Greek Catholic Church and contributed to the politicization of the population. Political loyalty became an important basis of legitimacy. The intervention

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[170] Hajjar, *Un lutteur infatigable*, 242.
[171] Ibid, 256.
[172] Social solidarity based on partisanship.

of these various patrons led to efforts to define the border between religious and civil jurisdictions. These dynamics partook in the confessionalization of Ottoman society, which affected intra-Christian relationships as much as inter-confessional interactions.

CHAPTER 4: THE TRANSFORMATIONS OF THE JEWISH COMMUNITIES OF *BILĀD AL-ŠĀM*

The institutionalization of the *millet* system during the *Tanzimat* reforms had similar consequences for the Greek Catholic and Jewish communities. Both communities acceded to a new form of recognition by the Ottoman government in this period. In the previous two chapters we explored the dynamics of the Greek Catholic *millet* which was shaken by the centralization and homogenization objectives of its patriarch, encouraged by both the Ottoman government and Rome. Authority was increasingly imposed in a top-down manner, fostering resistance, escape mechanisms and encouraging the intervention of foreign powers and the Ottoman government in the internal divisions of the community. Centralization also took the form of the construction of a confessional culture through policies of differentiation and separation with other Christians. Although there are less archives available regarding the Jews of Damascus than the Greek Catholics,[1] similar dynamics in the organization and administration of Jewish communities can be identified.

This chapter will explore the institutionalization of the Jewish *millet* during the *Tanzimat* reforms, pointing to similarities with Greek Catholics but also to differences. Indeed, the internal divisions of the Jewish communities were less visible and did not take place in the public space. These divisions were only hinted at in the various archives, but do not seem to have called attention beyond the Jewish community. As such, they had less effect on inter-confessional relations than the violent divisions within the Greek Catholic community.

We will first explore the composition of Jewish communities in the Ottoman Empire and in particular in Damascus. Second, we will analyse the transformations of authority and

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[1] I could not access content in Hebrew.

leadership of Jewish communities starting in the 18th century. Third, we will focus on the institutionalization of the Jewish *millet* during the *Tanzimat* period through the creation of the position of *Hahambaşı.* Finally, the influence of the Jewish enlightenment, the *haskalah,* and the various resistances it generated will be analyzed.

1. Jewish Communities of Damascus

Jews in the Ottoman Empire were organized in a decentralized way with various *kahals*, or autonomous congregations based on origins.[2] They did not have a central leadership. In the Ottoman Empire, Jewish communities tended to reside in main cities and had few members in the countryside.[3] Each city was independent from the other, and was internally divided between various congregations. This division in *kahals* created strong divisions which tended to accentuate polemical and religious debates. In the 17th century however, Jewish congregations started to overcome divisions of origins and formed increasingly integrated communities.[4]

In *Bilād al-Šām*, the different *kahals* were not as separate as in Anatolia and in the Balkans.[5] The two main settlements of Jews in the region were Damascus and Aleppo.[6] Close to Damascus, there were also Jewish communities in Dayr al-Qamar, Sidon, Ḥaṣbayā and Tripoli. However they declined in the first part of the 19th century.[7] There were initially

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[2] Haim Gerber, *Crossing Borders, Jews and Muslims in Ottoman Law, Economy and Society,* (Istanbul: ISIS Press, 2008), 50.
[3] Harel , *Syrian Jewry,* 27.
[4] Stanford. J. Shaw, *The Jews of the Ottoman Empire and the Turkish Republic* (London:Palgrave Macmillan, 1991),54.
[5] Gerber, *Crossing Borders,* 50.
[6] Estimates of the Jewish population in Damascus in the 19th century vary from 4000 to 10 000, *Kitāb al-āḥzān, 30*; Kamal S. Salibi, Yūsuf Q. Khūrī and American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, *The Missionary Herald, Reports from Ottoman Syria, 1819-1870* (London: NABU, 1995), 273; Richard Edwards, *La Syrie 1840–1862, histoire, politique, administration, population, religion et moeurs, évènements de 1860 d'après des actes officiels et des documents authentiques* (Paris: Amyot, 1862), 167; F.O., 195/196, Wood -Canning, May 19th 1842; F.O., 78/660, Wood- Aberdeen, February 9th 1846; Salo Baron, "The Jews and the Syrian Massacres of 1860," *Proceedings of the American Academy for Jewish Research* 4 (1932): 6; Yaron Harel, "Rabbi Isaac Aboulafia: Leader of the Education Revolution in Damascus 1864-1895," *International Journal of Jewish Education Research* 4, (2013): 9.
[7] Ibid, 79.

Arabized Jews (Mustaʿribūn)[8] and Karaites[9] who were joined in 1492 by Sephardis from Spain and by refuges from Sicily called Francos. Sephardis first spoke Ladino and gradually adopted Arabic.[10] It is recorded that in 1522 there were 500 Jewish families in the city of Damascus, and they already had three synagogues, one for Sephardis, another for Sicilians and finally one for 'native Jews' meaning Arabized Jews. Then, there was another one in Unb (Hūš al-bāšā) and one in Ğūbar where Arabic speaking Jews amounted to 60 families.[11] A traveller to Damascus mentioned that in 1830 there were three synagogues, two being in the city center and one on the outskirts in Jūbar.[12] In 1853, the Jewish population was estimated at 4000.[13]

In the 19th century, Algerian Jews and Ashkenazi Jews from Poland and Russia also took residence in Damascus.[14] Jews from India, Iraq and Persia joined them in the same period. When an earthquake shook Aleppo in 1822, many Aleppine Jews also came to reside in Damascus.[15] Some fifty Jews of Italian origins were also present.[16] These different communities were however recorded as a single community in the state census in the 19th century, unlike Christians who were recorded according to communities. As per their language, in the 19th century, Jews in Damascus spoke Arabic, albeit with some Ladino and Hebrew words.[17]

In addition to ethnic distinctions, which faded over time, there were also strong divisions in terms of class and cultural orientations among Damascenes Jews. The gap

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[8] Harel , *Syrian Jewry,*12.

[9] Karaites were a sect who lived relatively separately from other Jewish congregations, on this group see Shaw, *Jews of Ottoman Empire*, 467, 172; Gábor Ágoston and Bruce Alan Masters, *Encyclopedia of the Ottoman Empire* (New York, NY: Facts On File, 2009), 308.

[10] Šams al-dīn al-ʿAǧlāni, *Yahūd Dimašq al-Šām*, (Damascus: Maktaba al-ʿUlabī, 2008), 53.

[11] Norman A. Stillman, *The Jews of Arab Lands, a History and Source Book* (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society, 1979), 289.

[12] Walter J. Fischel, ed., *Unknown Jews in Unknown Lands, the Travels of Rabbi David D'Beth Hillel* (1824-1832) (New York, Ktar Publishing House, Inc., 1973), 65, 66; Harel , *Syrian Jewry,* 30.

[13] al-ʿAǧlāni, *Yahūd Dimašq,* 60.

[14] Harel , *Syrian Jewry,* 28.

[15] Ibid, 28.

[16] al-ʿAǧlāni, *Yahūd Dimašq,* 60.

[17] Fischel, *Unknown Jews in Unknown Lands,* 65.

between rich and poor was very wide, the community was composed of a small elite of around 10 families who owned large houses and the rest of the community was usually poor. The wealthy among the Jews built large houses, such as the famous house of the Stambouli family.[18] For a community of 5000 individuals there were approximately 800 living only on public charity.[19] In Damascus, the taxes were distributed based on the resources of the individual, so that most of the taxes were paid by twenty rich families.[20] The poor and the scholars were exempt from taxation.[21] We can observe the development of a large Jewish middle class in Aleppo already in the first part of the 19th century, while in Damascus there are no such indications.[22] However, albeit these socioeconomic differences, all the Jews were listed in the censuses as residing in the neighbourhood of al-Zaytūn without any exception.[23]

2. Authority and Leadership

Jewish communities in the Ottoman Empire were led both by a secular and a religious leadership. On the one hand, the role of the laity in this leadership was considerable. Lay councils (*ma'mad*) whose members were called *parnassim*, were in charge of fiscal and administrative matters and represented the communities.[24] They were in charge of distributing and collecting the taxes and often paid in advance the amount of the taxes, thus deepening the dependency of the other Jews on these individuals.[25] They also administered the establishment of monopolies and fixed the prices of commodities.[26] On the downside, they were also held responsible for the actions of the community. They were thereby often

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[18] Ibid, 32.
[19] F.O., 78/600, Wood-Aberdeen, February 9th 1846.
[20] Harel , *Syrian Jewry,* 73.
[21] Ibid, 74.
[22] Ibid, 54.
[23] Avner Levi, "Shav'at Aniyim: Social Cleavage, Class War and Leadership in the Sephardi community; The case of Izmir," in *Ottoman and Turkish Jewry: Community and Leadership*, ed. Aron Rodrigue (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University, 1992), 184.
[24] Leah Bornstein-Makovetsky, "Jewish Lay Leadership" and Ottoman Authorities during the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries," in *Ottoman and Turkish Jewry*, ed. Aron Rodrigue (Bloomington: Indiana University, 1992), 100. For a more detailed description of lay leadership institutions see Yaron Harel, *Intrigue and Revolution: Chief Rabbis in Aleppo, Baghdad, and Damascus, 1774-1914,* trans. Yehonatan Chipman (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2007), 3.
[25] Ibid, 91.
[26] Shaw, *Jews of Ottoman Empire*, 63-65.

imprisoned when the Jewish population did not comply with the Ottoman orders or failed to pay taxes.[27] The *parnassim* had the support of the government who recognized their authority and enforced it. In theory, they were supposed to be elected to their position.[28]

On the other hand, religious authority was in the hands of the grand rabbi and the rabbinical court rabbis. Below them in the hierarchy there were teachers and religious functionaries and finally at the bottom were the scholars with no fixed posts. All of these individuals were exempt from internal taxation. The grand rabbis of different cities officially had a similar status even if in reality some grand rabbis had a dominant role, such as the grand rabbi of Istanbul or Baghdad.[29] Judicial and religious functions were monopolized by the *Beit Din* court led by the grand rabbi of the city.[30] Grand rabbis were supposed to be communally selected,[31] by an assembly of taxpayers, excluding the poor from the decision-making process.[32]

However, the lay and religious institutions were not opposed to each other but rather interdependent. The *parnassim* derived their legitimacy from the rabbis, who sanctioned their actions based on religious law. Whenever they wanted to enact new regulations, they needed the approval of the grand rabbi.[33] In exchange, the *parnassim* provided a variety of services for the religious leadership. They financed the religious schools, provided stipends for the poor and gave salaries to scholars, including the grand rabbi. Because of this financial responsibility, the *parnassim* had a say in the election of grand rabbis.[34]

In addition to the grand rabbi, there were Torah scholars in Damascus (40-60 individuals) who were linked to yeshivas[35] in the houses of wealthy Jews. The scholars

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[27] Borntein-Makovetsky, "*Jewish Lay Leadership,*" 91.
[28] Shaw, *Jews of Ottoman Empire*, 63-65.
[29] Shaw, *Jews of Ottoman Empire*, 42.
[30] Avigdor Levy, *The Sephardim in the Ottoman Empire* (Princeton, N.J.: Darwin Press, 1992), 107.
[31] Harel , *Syrian Jewry,* 59.
[32] Ibid, 67.
[33] Ibid, 62.
[34] Harel , *Syrian Jewry,* 61.
[35] Schools of Talmudic learning

benefited from the *āwqāf* (*yekdeshot*) established for their benefit. Scholars were also administrators of these *āwāqf*. The community as a whole was responsible for their subsistence.[36] Scholars took fees for funerals, marriages, prayers, etc.[37] If they didn't have the sufficient funds they could also engage in commerce. Torah scholars were usually not wealthy, and the poor among them taught in Talmudic schools, even if they often could not obtain due payment for their activities.[38]

The Ottoman Empire in the 18th century was characterized by the decentralization of governance, which brought powerful families to monopolize the provincial institutions of the state in the provinces. The same dynamic is observable among religious groups. Among Jews, the *parnassim* came to bypass the election system and chose themselves their own successor by controlling the *ma'mad,* or lay councils.[39] The Grand rabbinate also came to be monopolized by a single family. The Greek Catholic community similarly saw the dominance of a few influential families on the administration of the Church. The 18th century was thus characterized by the centralization of power on a provincial level in all communities, due to the nature of the Ottoman rule.

In Damascus, the post of grand rabbi had been made hereditary in the 18th century and was monopolized by the Galante family, an Italian-Sephardi family from Rome which settled in the Ottoman Empire and obtained positions of grand rabbi in various cities.[40] The grand rabbi's increased power over the community led to tensions with the *parnassim.[41]* The *parnassim* of Damascus, like in many other cities, controlled the community and the grand rabbi through funding the communal institutions.[42] The Farḥī family was dominant among

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[36] Harel , *Syrian Jewry,* 37.
[37] Harel , *Syrian Jewry*, 38.
[38] Ibid, 38.
[39] Shaw, *Jews of Ottoman Empire*, 63-65.
[40] In Damascus, Mordecai Galante was the Grand Rabbi of Damascus until 1781, he was then followed by his son Moses Galante, Grand Rabbi until 1806; Harel,"Rabbi Isaac Aboulafia: Ābū al-ʿAfīyā," 11.
[41] Harel, *Intrigue and Revolution, 4.*
[42] Ibid.

the laity. There was thus a centralization of religious and secular power in the hands of a few families.[43]

The interdependence between the religious and secular leadership was challenged by the change of the elite and the reforms of the *Tanzimat*. The pre-*Tanzimat* leadership was well embedded in the religious framework of the Jewish community, adding to their legitimacy in the eyes of the people. For example, the notable Ḥāyīm Farḥī was called *Haham*[44] in the various chronicles. Mīḫāʾīl Mišāqa argued that it was because he knew the Torah very well.[45] Then, these leaders belonged to 'noble' families. However, a new elite arose in the first part of the 19th century which challenged the role of the *parnassim* and the centralization of power within Jewish communities. Starting with the Egyptian rule, other Jewish families assumed an important economic role. These were not outsiders neither new players as we have seen in the case of the Greek Catholics, they were instead well established families but they had been overshadowed by the political role of the Farḥī family. Similarly to the Greek Catholic established families, the traditional elite which had inherited their social status resented the increasing involvement of these other individuals into the affairs of the community.[46]

During the Egyptian rule in Damascus, the situation of the Jews followed the pattern of the Greek Catholics. With the installation of consuls and houses of commerce, Jews increasingly engaged in trade and obtained protégé statuses. However, contrary to Greek Catholics, Jewish merchants did not benefit from the initial French trade, but rather took the opportunities awarded to them by the English commercial dominance at the end of the 1840's. Jews had more trading houses than Christians and took more advantage of the new trading opportunities, also as a consequence of the monopolization of administrative positions by

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[43] The same dynamic was observable in Aleppo, Yaron Harel, "Jewish-Christian Relations in Aleppo." *IJMES* 30 (1998): 85.
[44] Rabbi.
[45] Mishāqah, *Murder, Mayhem*, 49.
[46] Harel, *Intrigue and Revolution*, 155.

Greek Catholics. In 1840, there were twenty-four Jewish trading houses in Damascus.[47] Their heavy involvement in trade is represented by the commercial power of the Piccioto family in Aleppo, whose members were under Austrian protection and were later named consuls. The richest families of Damascus were the Levy-Stambouli, Angel, Lisbona, Farḥī, Harārī, Tūbī and Ḥasūn.[48]

The dominant Farḥī family also engaged in trade with England early on. Among the wealthiest Jews of the city were two members of the Farḥī family, Murād and Nissim[49] They created alliances with other families in these domains.[50] Over the years however, while the Farḥī continued to be part of the lay leadership of the community, they did not continue to be active in foreign trade with Europe and were replaced by new families with British or Austrian protection.[51] For some reason, the Farḥī did not seek or were not awarded British or Austrian protection.

The Farḥī family had had difficulties recovering from a variety of changes. First, in Istanbul the Jewish bankers had been executed together with the Janissaries in 1823, thus depriving the provincial money-lenders such as the Farḥī of their financial base. According to some debts settlements documents found in the Ottoman archives, Rūfāʾīl Farḥī, to finance the *āġāwāt* who revolted against the Ottoman governor Salim Pasha in 1830, had to borrow from other bankers in Jerusalem, Izmir and other cities. While he was still able to keep his position thanks to this wide network, his children had to pay back his debts in the end of the 1840's.[52]   Then, conflicts over the inheritance of Ḥāyīm Farḥī and later of Rūfāʾīl Farḥī

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[47] John Bowring, *Report on the Commercial Statistics of Syria* (London, 1840) (New York: Arno Press, 1973), 94.
[48] Harel, *Syrian Jewry*, 73.
[49] Bowring, *Report*, 94.
[50] A.E., 166/PO-Serie D/20, vol. 2, Beaudin-Roussin, March 16th 1838.
[51] Harel, *Syrian Jewry*, 218.
[52] BOA, HR.MKT.172/95, February 6th 1849.

divided the family and led to the impoverishment of some of its members who thus lost their political influence.[53]

This change in the nature of the elite, from inherited status to economic activity and foreign status, transformed the relation between the *parnassim* and the religious establishment. The *parnassim* were now in majority foreign protégés and even foreign citizens, in the case of the Harārīs. They benefited from the protection of Britain, Austria and sometimes Prussia. As such, they were no longer submitted to the authority of the grand rabbi and the rabbinical court, as were foreign Jews.[54] Then, Ashkenazi Jews increasingly settled in the Ottoman Empire and attempted to obtain their independence from Sephardi authorities.[55]

The status of merchants under foreign protection had always been an issue of controversy in Jewish communities in the Ottoman Empire. The fact that they escaped the authority of the grand rabbi was problematic for the latter in case of bad behavior or financial issues, but also for the government, which was deprived of an intermediary to ensure order and the payment of taxes. In some cases, they were even attempts from Jewish communities to prevent foreign merchants from exercising their trade in their cities to avoid any problem with the authorities. In the 19th century, this problem became generalized because of the large number of foreign merchants and the increasing burden of taxation.[56]

Albeit these internal conflicts, from the outside, the Damascene Jewish population presented a united front, in part because of the nature of Jewish communities' opacity in their internal struggles, in clear contrast to the Christian communities who did not hesitate to call for the intervention of the government in their internal issues. In the 19th century, some *parnassim* did bribe the government in order to obtain redress on some issues for which the

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[53] Harel , *Syrian Jewry,* 35.
[54] Ibid, 218.
[55] Matthias B. Lehman, "Rethinking Sephardi Identity: Jews and Other Jews in Ottoman Palestine," *Jewish Social Studies*, New Series 15, no. 1 (2008): 90.
[56] Aryeh Shmuelevitz, *The Jews of the Ottoman Empire in the late fifteenth and the sixteenth centuries, Administrative, Economic, Legal and Social Relations as Reflected in the Responsa* (Leiden: Brill, 1984), 118.

rabbinical courts had refused to give them their rights, but they did not call for the intervention of foreign powers in their internal divisions.[57] The protection of Christian communities was also a more politically relevant issue for foreign powers, encouraging them to intervene in internal conflicts.

In this period, conflicts between the lay leadership and the grand rabbi were common. *Parnassim*, who were financially responsible for the grand rabbi's salary, wished to exert some level of influence over this position.[58] Conflicts took place between Grand Rabbi Yaʾqūb ʿAntābi (1816-1842) and some members of the Farḥī and Harārī families. ʿAntābi had been elected by the *parnassim*, led by the Farḥī family. At the time of ʿAntābi's election, the Farḥī family enjoyed a dominant status. He had been chosen over Rabbi Ḥāyīm Nissim Ābū al-ʿAfīya because he was less wealthy and independent, and thus could be easily influenced, even though he was younger and less knowledgeable.[59] This strategy however seems to have failed. Indeed, in 1833, a conflict occurred between different members of the Farḥī family over the inheritance of Ḥāyīm Farḥī, which included many *āwqāf* and funds for the support of the religious schools. This inheritance was thus was a key to control the rabbinate. Ḥāyīm's sons Rūfāʾīl, Menāḥīm, Sulaymān and Mūsā were in disagreement over the distribution of the inheritance. ʿAntābi took a certain decision regarding the distribution. Mūsā and his sons refused the decision taken by ʿAntābi, tried to dismiss him of his post and even to get him arrested. Mūsā Farḥī's the support of the rabbis who criticized ʿAntābi for taking this decision without consulting them.[60] The unilateral decision-making power of the grand rabbi, which increased since the second part of the 18th century, was more and more challenged by the rabbinate. This dynamic resembled tensions which were taking place in the Greek Catholic Church.

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[57] Harel , *Syrian Jewry*, 64.
[58] Harel, *Intrigue and Revolution*, 144.
[59] Ibid, 61.
[60] Ibid, 61.

The aforementioned conflicts between the notables and the grand rabbi cannot be reduced to a struggle between the religious and the lay sphere. Indeed, the involvement of other rabbis into disputes between the notables and the grand rabbi, and their refusal to admit his legal opinions points to a changing conception of authority and a re-shuffling of the relations between the different levels of the religious hierarchy.[61] Judicial authority was at the center of this power struggle. Which issues were to be dealt with in the *ma'mad* and which one in the *Beit Din*? Who was to hold be the *posek* (halakhic authority, decision-making power)?

The fight between Mūsā Farḥī and Grand Rabbi ʿAntābi also involved various grand rabbis in the vicinity, each one siding with the other. Moses had the support of the concurrent of ʿAntābi, Ḥāyīm Nissim Ābū al-ʿAfīyā, who in the meantime had been awarded a rabbi position in Tiberias. ʿAntābi on the other hand had the support of the Grand Rabbis of Jerusalem Ibrāhīm Ḥayyim Gagin and Rūfāʾīl Yūsuf Ḥaḏān.[62]

Another conflict took place between the grand rabbi and the Harārī family. They were under British protection and refused to be submitted to his religious rulings. ʿAntābi criticized their lack of religious observance. In retribution, they withheld his salary for two and a half years.[63] By challenging the decision of the grand rabbi, the notables were questioning the authority of the court in matters of inheritance. The conflicts between the lay leadership and the grand rabbis continued throughout the 19th century.[64] It is only after the bankruptcy of the lay leaders of Damascus in 1875 caused by the economic crisis and the devaluation of bonds, that Grand Rabbi Ābū al-ʿAfīya could really have a determinant role in the community.[65]

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[61] Haren, *Syrian Jewry,* 71.
[62] David Abulafia, "A Minority within a Minority: Reflections on Sephardi identity," *European Judaism: A Journal for the New Europe* 33, no. 1 (2000): 10-19.
[63] Harel , *Syrian Jewry*, 61.
[64] Harel , *Syrian Jewry,* 63.
[65] Yaron Harel, *Zionism in Damascus: Ideology and Activity in the Jewish Community at the beginning of the twentieth century*' (London: I.B. Tauris Publishers, 2015), 2.

In conclusion, the case of Damascus reveals that the relation between the religious leadership and the secular leadership and between the grand rabbi and the rabbis were being simultaneously reconsidered. The breakdown of the relation of interdependence between the grand rabbis, the rabbinical court and the *parnassim* was favored by the rise of a new commercial class under foreign protection and the increasing power of the grand rabbi. These questions mirror the developments within the Greek Catholic community, in which the power relation between bishops and the patriarch and between the merchant elite and the clergy were intertwined and foreign protection became a tool of power to escape the religious leadership.

3. Centralizing Judiciary Power

While the religious leadership was competing for judicial authority, the Ottoman reform of 1839 reduced the jurisdiction of the *Beit Din*.[66] It was made competent only in issues of personal status law.[67] The religious court was the main institution through which the religious leaders could enforce communal regulations and law, and thus exert their control over the community. It was the central tool of independence. The creation of secular courts or the jurisdiction given to the *maǧlis* to deal with civil issues during the *Tanzimat* was thus a direct threat to their authority and the independence of the rabbis.[68]

It was not uncommon for Jews to refuse to appear in front of the *Beit Din*, or to use the *qāḍī* court, secular court or *maǧlis* as a way to circumvent the religious hierarchy or when the decision taken in the *Beit Din* did not satisfy them.[69] To counter this dynamic, Jewish religious leaders forbade Jews from using the secular courts and instead compelled them to use only the *Beit Din*.[70] Yet Jews continued to use these institutions especially in cases of inheritance, property and commercial or financial disputes.[71] Paradoxically, in the *Tanzimat*

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[66] Ibid, 67.
[67] Shaw, *Jews of the Ottoman Empire,* 150.
[68] Harel, *Syrian Jewry,* 144.
[69] Ibid, 72.
[70] Shaw, *Jews of the Ottoman Empire*, 83.
[71] Harel , *Syrian Jewry,* 72.

period, there was both an increasing clerical authority and the creation of a multiple institutions which allowed the individual to escape this authority.

The 1858 land registry law, which called for the registration of public land in the *mağlis* and the officialization of land transactions, made illegal land purchases which were not registered with a *tapu* deed.[72] This law was only applied to *miri* (public land) but it caused various conflicts regarding claims of ownership. For the Jewish leadership, this law meant that even in a transaction was conducted between Jews, they had to appear in front of the *mağlis* and the state law would be applied instead of the halakhic law. Some rabbis agreed to this reform based on the notion that the law of the king was to be obeyed.[73] This notion, born out of the specific conditions of the Jewish diaspora, was present in all Jewish communities, including Algerian Jews. When a conflict arose between the religious law and the law of the country it was the latter that was to be followed.[74] Other rabbis, however, rather rejected this reform. The refusal to apply this law was not granted in halakhic precedents, for property law were considered 'secular' and thus those who rejected such a reform, mainly the rabbis of Aleppo followed by the rabbis of Damascus, called for a new interpretation of the halakha on this issue.[75]

Similarly to the conflicts between the Greek Catholic patriarch and his bishops, the grand rabbi's judicial authority was weakened by Jewish notables' use of the qādī court and by the *Tanzimat* reforms which reduced the role of the religious courts, leading some rabbis to oppose these changes.

4. The Institutionalization of the Jewish millet: Position of Hahambaşı

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[72] Legal ownership right.
[73] Zohar Zvi, *Rabbinic Creativity in the Modern Middle East* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2013), 98.

[74] Valerie Assan, *Les Consistoires israélites d'Algérie au XIXe siècle. « L'alliance de la civilisation et de la religion »* (Paris: Armand Colin, coll. « Recherche », 2012), 17.
[75] Zohar Zvi, *Rabbinic Creativity in the Modern Middle East* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2013), 98.

Until the *Tanzimat*, Jews of the Ottoman Empire were not represented by a single religious leader. While a position of *hahambaşı* had been first granted in 1525 to Moses Capsali followed by Elijah Mizrahi, their jurisdiction never extended beyond Istanbul. After Mizrahi's death in 1526 the office was left vacant because of internal divisions.[76] Since Jewish communities of the Empire did not have a specific religious head to represent them in Istanbul, they had previously relied on the patronage of state doctors and bankers who enjoyed a large influence with the sultans in the 16th century. They partook on the decision-making process in the capital and presented the petitions and requests of Jews throughout the empire to the Sublime Porte.[77]

However, in the 19th century these influential Jews of Istanbul faced a cruel fate. When Janissaries were executed in 1826, important Jewish figures who were financially related to this institution met the same fate, leaving the community without representation.[78] This lack of lay leadership created a need for representation for the Jewish community and in 1835 the post of *hahambaşı* was created to represent the entirety of the Ottoman Empire's Jewish community from Istanbul, thus centralizing their political representation.[79] It was created in part to answer this need for representation and in part because the Ottoman government saw the Jews as the example of a loyal *millet* after the rebellion and secession of Greece in 1832.[80]

The institutionalization of the Jewish religious leadership created a hierarchy quite foreign to Ottoman Jews. Abraham Levi, who obtained a *berat* in 1835,[81] was supposed to be the representative of the Jews in the whole empire and to hold a higher rank in the hierarchy than other grand rabbis. The sultan had an important role to play in the choice of *hahambaşı*

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[76] Shaw, *Jews of Ottoman Empire*, 42.
[77] Bornstein-Makovetsky, "Jewish Lay Leadership," 100.
[78] Shaw, *Jews of the Ottoman Empire,* 148.
[79] Ibid.
[80] Levy, " *millet* Politics," 434.
[81] Shaw, *Jews of the Ottoman Empire,* 149.

as he could refuse to recognize his election or had to confer upon him an official recognition of his status.[82] This reform opened the way for the appointment of rabbis by the state.[83] For many, it represented the recognition of Jews as an official *millet*.[84] This change mirrors the institutionalization of Catholic Churches.[85] Then, the appointment of a *hahambaşı* changed the balance of power between the laity and the religious leadership because for the first time since the 16th century the representative of the Jewish community originated from the religious hierarchy instead of the notables.

The institution of the position of *hahambaşı* did not meet with the immediate acceptance of Ottoman Jews and even led to harsh criticism.[86] Many saw this institution as an attempt of the state to interfere in religious affairs. In the end, because of this resistance, a religious office of grand rabbi (*Rav ha-kolel*) of Istanbul continued to exist side by side with the *hahambaşı*.[87] The Grand Rabbi was in charge of religious issues and the *hahambaşı* was in charge of communication and representation in front of the Ottoman government.[88]

Similarly to the case of the Greek Catholics, the border between civil and spiritual authority was unclear and led to conflicts within the leadership.[89] The *hahambaşı* officially had three functions: he was first a government employee in charge of the administration of the Jewish communities in the Ottoman Empire and thus was responsible for collecting taxes, enforcing compliance with the state's laws, and was the conduct through which Jews in the empire could communicate their complains to the government. In this capacity, he fulfilled the role of the *parnassim*. Then, he was the administrator of all Jewish waqf. Finally he was a religious leader and was thus at the highest legal position and had the right to

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[82] Franco, *Essai*, 151.
[83] Levy, "Shav'at Aniyim," 195.
[84] Levy, *The Sephardim,* 105.
[85] Masters, *Christians and Jews,* 139
[86] Levy, *The Sephardim,* 105, 106.
[87] Franco, *Essai sur l'histoire,* 152.
[88] Levy, *The Sephardim*, 106.
[89] Harel, *Intrigue and Revolution*, 7.

excommunicate.[90] However, his actual position in the hierarchy was unclear. Some authors such as Stanford Shaw describe his position as superior to grand rabbis, mirroring the office of patriarch. Yet, for others it was simply a representative post, but did not yield specific powers within the community.[91] His position also encroached on the jurisdiction of the members of the rabbinic court, encouraging them to challenge the hahambaşı's involvement in religious affairs.[92] The institutionalization of the Jewish *millet* thus further challenged the interdependence between the notables and the religious leadership that had ensured the balance of power between the two groups.[93]

After Istanbul, provincial offices of *hahambaşı* were instituted in Jerusalem in 1841, in Baghdad in 1848, and Damascus in 1849 among others, with the intervention of the *hahambaşı* of Istanbul.[94] The various resistances to the creation of a single representative for all the Jews of the Ottoman Empire must have triggered the creation of these positions. Conflicts over the appointment of *hahambaşılar* were numerous, especially in Jerusalem, Sidon and Aleppo.[95] In Jerusalem, Abraham Gagin was appointed in 1841 by the *hahambaşı* of Istanbul and met with a strong opposition among the population, especially among Ashkenazis who refused to be imposed his leadership. As a result of these divisions, similarly to Istanbul, in the provinces, the position of Grand Rabbi, or *rav ha-kolel* continued to exist side by side with the *hahambaşı*. In Damascus also, the appointment of the *hahambaşı* Jacob Perez in 1849 led to the division of the office of grand rabbi between a *hahambaşı* and a *Rav ha-kolel*. The two offices remained separate until 1880. *Hahambaşı* Perez was to be in charge of representation with the authorities and *Rav ha-kolel* Hārūn Yaʿqūb Binyāmīn Baġdādī was to be in charge of rabbinical courts, and exercise halakhic[96] authority. The relationship

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[90] Ibid, 8; Shaw, *Jews of the Ottoman Empire*, 150.
[91] Levy, *The Sephardim*, 107; Avigdor Levy, "*Millet* Politics," 432.
[92] Harel, *Intrigue and Revolution*, 11.
[93] Ibid, 101-103.
[94] BOA, A.DVN.40.33, October 3rd 1848; Levy, *The Sephardim,* 107.
[95] Ibid.
[96] Religious law.

between the *rav ha-kolel* who did not receive any official position or *berat* and the official position of *hahambaşı* was quite difficult.[97]

The creation of the position of the *hahambaşı* was an attempt to create a top-down hierarchy at the level of the empire, which was foreign to Jewish communal organization and thus led to a strong opposition among the rabbinate. Divisions did not simply pit the laity against the rabbinate but rather cut across these two groups. The attempt of the grand rabbi to impose his authority on those who had previously benefited from some level of interstitial freedom led to resistances and mirrors the efforts of homogenization of norms at play in the Greek Catholic community.

5. *Haskalah* and Transnational Imagination : European Influence

In the 19th century, Jewish communities in the Ottoman Empire were also shaken by transformations on the religio-cultural level. Mysticism had been widespread in the Ottoman Empire. It was linked to the arrival of Francos in the 17th century, which brought a revival in the Sephardi *minhag* (customs) and a Ladino cultural revival. Ladino rabbinical literature was linked with Lurianic Kabbalah, a form of mysticism which dominated theology in the modern era and had links with the Sabatean movement.[98] After the initial decline of Hebrew printing since 16th century, the resurgence of the Ladino language and cultural revival brought about the development of the printing presses in the beginning of the 18th century and favored a print culture. Before the 18th century, rabbinical works circulated in manuscript among elites. With the development of print, it spread among non-elites.[99]

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[97] Ibid.

[98] Jacob Barnai, "From Sabbateanism to Modernization: Ottoman Jewry on the Eve of the Ottoman Reforms and the Haskala," in *Sephardi and Middle Eastern Jewries: History and Culture in the Modern Era*, ed. Harvey Goldberg (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1996), 75. For an account of the Sabbatean movement see Jacob Barnai, "The Sabbatean movement in Smyrna: the social background," in *Jewish Sects, Religious Movements, and Political Partie*s, ed. Menachem Mor. (Omaha, NE: Creighton University Press, 1992), 113-122.

[99] Barnai, " From Sabbateanism", 75.

As Matthias Lehmann observes, these dynamics coincided with the development of an Ottoman print culture in the 18th century.[100] Apparently, the funder of the first Jewish press Jonah Ashkenazi had helped Ibrahim Müteferikka to establish the first Ottoman press in 1720. However, both Ottoman ulema and rabbis worried about the spread of vernacular print to the population as a tool of social change and for this reason the Ottoman government did not print religious books until later on.[101] Together with the printed rabbinical works, vernacular literature was also developed.[102] The secular Sephardi literature was built on the rabbinic Ladino literature of the 18th century.[103] Various newspapers were also created in the first part of the 19th century such as Sha'are Mizrah, La Buena Esperanza. The themes of these newspapers were loyalty to the Ottoman government, ideas of civilization and progress and modern education.[104]

The development of a Ladino print culture propelled local Jewish communities into the larger Sephardi world in Europe and North Africa.[105] In Ottoman society at large, there was a wave of translations of European books, which were read outloud in cafes, giving access to knowledge for everyone, even the illiterate.[106] While Jews in the Ottoman Empire saw their horizons expand to the larger Sephardi world, they also found a new place within the Ottoman state structure. Julia Phillips Cohen argues that in the 19th century Jews further defined their role as imperial citizens, not against the state but instead through their 'patriotic' relations to it. In Jewish narratives and in Ottoman discourses, the empire's welcoming of the Jews fleeing persecutions from Spain in 1492 was omnipresent.[107] This narrative of Ottoman clemency towards persecuted Jews since the 15th century justified in the eyes of the Jewish

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[100] Matthias Lehmann, *Ladino Rabbinic Literature and Ottoman Sephardic Culture (*Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2005), 40.
[101] Ibid, 41.
[102] Ibid, 39.
[103] Ibid, 47.
[104] Ibid, 46.
[105] Lehmann, *Ladino Rabbic Literature,* 41.
[106] Ibid, 48.
[107] Julia Phillips Cohen, *Becoming Ottomans: Sephardi Jews and Imperial Citizenship in the Modern Era* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 141.

leaders the payment of the *ǧizya* as a social contract which allowed them to buy their safety from persecution.[108]

The *Haskalah* movement interacted both with the development of mysticism and the emphasis on Jewish imperial citizenship. The *Haskalah*, otherwise called Jewish Enlightenment, was closely linked with the emancipation of Jews in Europe.[109] In 18th and 19th century Europe, especially in Germany, this movement sought to integrate Jews in the society in which they lived. In order to do so, Jews were encouraged to leave the ghetto and to mix with non-Jews. It was also underlined by a new engagement with religious sciences and challenged the place of *halakha* in the life of Jews, thus questioning the authority of the rabbis over the Jewish communities. Jews were encouraged to engage in education in secular studies, to study biblical Hebrew rather than Yiddish. In the field of scholarship it was exemplified by critical editions of rabbinical works. This movement focused on the study of history and emphasized a secular Jewish identity rather than a religious one. In Europe, the *Haskalah* entailed a front attack on the religious establishment. In the Ottoman Empire, the context was quite different. The religious/secular division developed in Europe made no sense to the inhabitants of the Ottoman Empire whose life was underlined by the permanence of religion. In the Ottoman Empire, the *Haskalah* was rather predominantly marked by an attack on mysticism and tradition.[110]

In general, the Sephardi rabbis of the Ottoman Empire did not take a confrontational approach to the *Haskalah*, as it was the case with Ashkenazi Orthodoxy, because it did not take place in a confrontational and anti-religious atmosphere. There was no perceived direct

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[108] Ibid, 141.

[109] On the Haskhalah see Shmuel Feiner, *The Jewish Enlightenment* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011); Olga Litvak, *Haskalah: The Romantic Movement in Judaism* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2012).

[110] Represented in the Ottoman Empire by the Sabbatean movement, Jacob Barnai, "Christian Messianism and the Portuguese Marranos: The Emergence of Sabbateanism in Smyrna," *Jewish History* (Fall 1993): 119–126; For a comprehensive overview of the scholarship on mysticism see Frederick E. Greenspahn, *Jewish Mysticism and Kabbalah: New Insights and Scholarship* (New York: New York University Press, 2011).

threat to the continuation of the religious establishment.[111] Rabbis were however well aware of the stakes of this change because these developments led to theological debates and encouraged a profusion of writings. For example, in Anatolia and especially in cities such as Smyrna, there were in the 19th century vivid theological debates followed by writings supported by the profusion of printing presses and the birth of various newspapers in the first part of the 19th century.[112]

In *Bilād al-Šām*, these cultural and religious developments were not as remarkable for the first part of the 19th century, but printing presses were developed, notably in Safad and Jerusalem.[113] Little is known about the Damascene Jewish cultural development in this period, in comparison to the profusion of works on Anatolian Jewry.[114] We do know that important Damascene rabbis, such as Grand Rabbi Ābū al-ʿAfīya wrote significant works from 1875 onwards.[115] Damascus was however not isolated form the greater cultural context and various books reached Damascus.[116] Ābū al-ʿAfīya described in the 1870's the influx of books coming from what he calls "the cities of the Ashkenazis", pointing to his perception of Europe.[117] The influence of European culture in the region thus meant the influence of the Ashkenazi in mostly *Mustʿarībūn* and Sephardi communities. Reactions to the *Haskalah* also have to be understood as part of this ethnic dynamic.

In *Bilād al-Šām*, there were various oppostions to the *Haskalah.* In Aleppo, the rabbis rejected the use of annex sciences in the commentaries of the Torah. Rabbi Eliyahu Ben Amozegh had published a commentary of the Torah using philology, archeology and history to explain its meanings. In this effort, the author made parallels between pagan beliefs

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[111] Zohar Zvi, *Rabbinic Creativity,* 357.
[112] Levy, *The Sephardim,* 90.
[113] Rina Cohen, "L'affaire de Damas et les prémices de l'antisémitisme moderne," *Archives Juives* 34, no. 1 (2001): 10; David Rossoff, *Safed:The Mystical City* (Jerusalem and Brooklyn: Shaar Books, 1991), 161-162.
[114] See for example Avner Levi, "Shavat Aniyim: Social cleavage, class war and leadership in the Sephardi community the case of Izmir 1847," in *Ottoman and Turkish Jewry: Community and Leadership*, ed. Aaron Rodrigue (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1992).
[115] On his works see Yaron Harel, "Rabbi Isaac Aboulafia".
[116] Harel , *Syrian Jewry*, 201.
[117] Ibid, 201.

and the Torah. It was perceived as such an heresy by the Aleppine rabbinic scholars that they burned the book, which contained the Talmud itself, a punishment only reserved for heretics. This step was followed by Damascene rabbinic scholars, even if some of their preeminent members of the community criticized this extreme reaction.[118]

In addition to religious reform, the *Haskalah* movement sought to reform the place of Jews in non-Jewish society. Wealthy European Jews were dedicated to the development of education among Jews. They attempted to remedy what they perceived as the inferiority of Middle Eastern Jews.[119] One of these wealthy British Jews was Moses Montefiore. He attributed the execution of the Jewish leadership in 1826 and the various accusations of blood libels in this period to the fact that Jews did not know enough the Ottoman language and lived too separately from other communities, both of which could be remedied through the establishment of secular schools. The Ottoman Jewish banker Abraham Salomon Kamondo also supported this interpretation.[120] In the 19th century, Christians were able to better take advantage of the employment opportunities awarded to non-Muslims after the decree of 1856 because of their mastering of foreign languages, which Jews tended not to know.[121] They were thus more represented in the administration than Jews.[122] This was even more true in Damascus. When the French banker Gustav de Rotchild came to Damascus in 1850, he had to use the services of the dragoman of the French Consulate to speak with the local Jewish notables, whom he described as ignorant of foreign languages.[123] Ottoman bureaucrats also wished to see Jews more involved in various state institutions, which required a focus on education and especially knowledge of languages. Jews were encouraged to join institutions such as the Ottoman School of Medicine or the Translation bureau. In order to attract them,

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[118] Zohar Zvi, *Rabbinic Creativity,* 97.
[119] Yaron Harel, "Rabbi Isaac Aboulafia," 5, 7.
[120] Shaw, *Jews of the Ottoman Empire,* 160.
[121] Levy, *The Sephardim,* 95.
[122] Carter V. Findley, "The Acid Test of Ottomanism: The Acceptance of Non-Muslims in the Late Ottoman Bureaucracy," in *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Empire : The Functioning of a Plural Society,* ed. Braude, Benjamin and Bernard Lewis, vol.1 (New York: Holmes & Meier Publishers, 1982), 344.
[123] A.E., 166/PO-Serie D/20, vol. 1, Lavalette- de Ségur, December 5th 1850.

specific arrangements were made to satisfy their religious obligations regarding food and holy days.[124]

The question of education was closely linked to foreign intervention. To reach important positions within the administration, Jews had to receive a similar education to their Christian peers. This education was often at the hand of missionaries. Some rabbis were adamant to forbid the education of Jews in missionary schools which they suspected of trying to convert Jews to Christianity. In Istanbul, the *hahambaşı* also warned Jews not to enroll their children in these schools.[125] Such an issue had been presented in 1843 by an correspondent from Istanbul cited in the Jewish American newspaper 'The Occident', which led him to advocate sending Ottoman Jews to Europe for education.[126] When the first schools started to teach French in 1856, some rabbis made a direct link between the learning of French and the lessening of religious observance.[127]

In the face of Protestant missionary activities amongst Jews in Palestine, and the presence of Irish and Scottish missionaries in Damascus, the concerns of Jewish community leaders was not misplaced. The rabbis were right to worry about the Protestant schools because the first Protestant missions did seek to convert Jews.[128] Protestant activities among

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[124] Avigdor Levy, *The Sephardim,* 110.

[125] Shaw, *Jews of the Ottoman Empire*, 160.

[126] "The Jews of the East",The Occident and American Jewish Advocate, ed. Isaac Leeser and Mayer Sulzberger, vol. 1, no.1, (April 1843): 37.

[127] Rodrigue, "The Beginning of Westernization" 451.

[128] Makdisi, *Artillery of Heaven*, 66, 94. On education and missionary activity see Mehmet Ali Doğan and Heather Sharkey eds., *American Missionaries and the Middle East: Foundational Encounters* (Salt Lake City:University of Utah Press, 2011); Verdeil, *La mission jésuite;* Karène Sanchez, *Politiques, éducation et identités linguistiques. Le collège des Frères des écoles chrétiennes de Jérusalem (1922-1939)* (Utrecht: LOT, 2009); Olivier Bocquet, *Missionnaires Français en terre d'Islam*; Rao Humphreys Lindsay, "Nineteenth Century American Schools in the Levant: A Study of Purposes." PhD diss., (University of Michigan, 1965); Selçuk Akşim Somel, *The Modernization of Public Education in the Ottoman Empire: Islamization, Autocracy, Discipline* (Leiden: Brill, 2001); Heleen Murre-van den Berg, *New faith in ancient lands*; Roderic H. Davison, "Westernized Education in Ottoman Turkey," *Middle East Journal* 15, no. 3 (1961): 289-301; Susanna Ferguson, "'A Fever for an Education': Pedagogical Thought and Social Transformation in Beirut and Mount Lebanon, 1861–1914," *Arab Studies Journal* 26, no.1 (2018): 58–83; Ellen Fleischmann, "Evangelization or Education: American Protestant Missionaries, the American Board, and the Girls and Women of Syria (1830–1910)," in *New Faith in Ancient Lands: Western Missions in the Middle East in the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries*, ed. Heleen Murre-van den Berg, 263–280 (Leiden: Brill, 2006); Julia Hauser, Christine B. Lindner, and Esther Moller, eds., *Entangled Education: Foreign and Local Schools in Ottoman Syria and Mandate Lebanon (19th–20th centuries)* (Beirut: Orient-Institut, 2016); Christine B. Lindner, *Negotiating the Field:*

Jews had at first been welcomed because they provided Hebrew bibles and resources and were associated with British interests. In the 1850's, these activities however attracted the resentment of many rabbis who took issue with their proselytizing goals.[129] While in Damascus, conversions of Jews to Christianity were not numerous, in Izmir on the other hand many poor Jews converted to Protestantism.[130] Damascene rabbis banned sending Jewish children to Protestant schools and co-operation with Protestant missionaries, allegedly under the influence of the Catholics.[131] The British consul Wood called the rabbis to discuss the issue and explained that the Protestant schools had no aim to convert Jews but rather to provide education to all, and especially to the poor. He threatened the rabbis to cut his relations with them if they insisted. Out of fear of losing such a precious ally, the rabbis lifted the ban on joining these schools.[132] In 1872 the ban was again applied, and the British consul succeeded a second time in lifting it. The *hahambaşı* Jacop Perez was present in these two case, and he argued that the rabbis acted without his consent.[133]

Beyond interactions between Jews and non-Jews in missionary schools, some rabbis also resented the increasing social interactions of Jews and non-Jews in cities of *Bilād al-Šām*. The Jewish merchant class came into close interaction and developed partnerships with non-Jews. They also lived in mixed neighborhoods. It called for close interaction and cultural exchanges, which did not please some of the rabbis.[134]

Beyond missionary schools there was the option of creating schools specific for Jews. In 1840, three European philanthropists, Adolphe Cremieux, Moses Montefiore and Salomon

American Protestant Missionaries in Ottoman Syria, 1823 to 1860, PhD diss., (Edinburgh University, 2009); Somel, Selçuk Akşim, *The Modernization of Public Education in the Ottoman Empire: Islamization, Autocracy, Discipline* (Leiden: Brill, 2001).

[129] Harel , *Syrian Jewry*, 190.
[130] Avigdor Levy, *The Sephardim,* 196.
[131] Ibid, 190.
[132] Ibid, 222-223.
[133] Harel *, Syrian Jewry*, 225.
[134] Harel , *Syrian Jewry*, 155.

Munk, obtained from Muḥammad ʿAlī the authorization to build secular schools for Jews.[135] In Istanbul, Moses Montefiore, together with the banker Abraham Kamondo also attempted to build schools, but attracted the ire of Jewish rabbis. The school projects were abandoned because of this opposition.[136] It is only in 1860 that the project really materialized and the Alliance Israelite Universelle was created. One of the reasons for this change was that the new *hahambaşı* of Istanbul, Yakub Avigdor, obtained his post through the support of Kamondo and thus supported his enterprise.[137] In Istanbul, two Rabbis, Shlomo Kamhi and Yitzhak Akrish, led the opposition to the secular education. Akrish was sent to prison on order of Fuad Paşa.[138] In 1860, *Hahambaşı* Yakub Avigdor made thorough reforms in the organization of the Jewish community.[139] However, he met with such a strong opposition by some rabbis who criticized his links to Kamondo and the government, that he was dismissed in 1862. Following this defeat, Kamondo moved his office to Europe.[140]

The question of education reveals a great division within the community between secular leaders such as Kamondo and a certain part of the religious leadership. To be sure, the religious leadership was also divided in various factions. This division is observable in Damascus, where the community was internally divided on the issue of reform. When the Damascene Grand Rabbi Ābū al-ʿAfīya supported the education of Jews in secular school in 1875, he met with the disapproval of other rabbis.[141]

It should be kept in mind that the creation of secular schools threatened the livelihood of most of the rabbis teaching in rabbinic schools. When the new type of education was developed, the scholars of lower classes thus saw them as a threat to their subsistence. The

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[135] Shaw, *Jews of the Ottoman Empire*, 158.
[136] Ibid, 161.
[137] Ibid, 161.
[138] Shaw, *Jews of the Ottoman Empire,* 161.
[139] He conducted a tax reform which increased the revenue derived from the communities and created a new *Beit Din*. He also set up rabbinical courts in some places such as Serez, Adrianople and Smyrna. He then made a *mağlis* in all neighborhoods led by elected members; Ibid, 161-162.
[140] Ibid, 162.
[141] Yaron Harel, "Rabbi Isaac Aboulafia", 10.

conflict between the elite promoting secular schools and the resistance of Talmudic schools teachers thus also had a class dimension and cannot be reduced to a conservative/modern dichotomy.

Similarly to the dynamics within the Greek Catholics, the collection of funds from Europe was an important basis of legitimacy of the leadership and a tool of power. The funding of schools was a tool in the power struggles over the community institutions.[142] The establishment of diaspora philanthropic associations and the institutionalization of the Jewish *millet* in 19th century encouraged to imagine a common identity among Jews in the Ottoman Empire.[143] However, the increasing influx of charity and repeated disputes regarding these funds and its distribution among the population reinforced sub-ethnic distinctions such as between Sephardi and Ashkenazi Jews.[144] It also strengthened identifications based on the dichotomy between local and foreign Jews, between Ottoman and European subjects.[145]

The reaction of the *hahambaşı* and certain rabbis against the secular education of Jews has also to be seen against the background of the *Haskalah* movement which threatened the survival of the religious authority. The *Haskalah* also promoted the idea of the diffusion of the decision-making power, which encouraged rabbis to question the monopoly of the grand rabbi on the tools of decision-making.

In conclusion, the Jewish community of Damascus went through similar transformations as the Greek Catholic community. Widened clerical authority came at the price of lessened autonomy. The intervention of the state in the appointments of *hahambaşı* was seen as problematic by a large part of the Jewish communities. Then, the imposition of a top-down authority on the flock and the attempts at homogenizing norms and practices led to widespread resistance, especially amongst notables. These notables and merchant used the

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[142] Harel, *Intrigue and Revolution*, 153, 154.
[143] Yair Wallach, "Rethinking the *yishuv*: late-Ottoman Palestine's Jewish communities revisited", *Journal of Modern Jewish Studies* 16, no.2 (2017): 289.
[144] Lehman, "Rethinking," 84, 85, 87, 98.
[145] Ibid, 91, 93.

multiple jurisdictions created by foreign intervention and the new institutions of the *Tanzimat* to escape the increasing authority of the religious leadership. European influence took place through direct foreign intervention in the empire as well as on a cultural level with the *Haskalah,* which similarly to Latin influence among Greek Catholics, fostered opposition among the Jewish leadership and discourses of authenticity based on the local/foreign dichotomy. However, the internal divisions of Damascene Jews took place behind the scenes of the public political life and, unlike the struggles within the Greek Catholic millet, did not have consequences on inter-confessional relations.

PART 2: CONFESSIONALIZATION AND THE *TANZIMAT* STATE: COMPETITION FOR ACCESS TO RESOURCES, SECTARIAN DISCOURSES AND POPULAR MOBILIZATION

CHAPTER 5: THE CRIMEAN WAR, THE ISLAHAT FERMANI AND INTER-CONFESSIONAL RELATIONS

Religious communities were transformed internally by the Ottoman *Tanzimat* reforms. On a society-wide level, the reforms and especially the 1856 Islahat Fermanı which granted some level of equality to religious communities shook inter-confessional relations. The Islamic institution of the *ḏimma* which had regulated the status of non-Muslims in the Ottoman Empire was challenged by these reforms. Yet, the notion of citizenship and Ottomanism was not yet entrenched as a new social contract.[1] The end of the Crimean War which corresponded to the drafting of the Islahat Fermanı decree marked the arrival of new decision-makers in Istanbul and a shift away from the initial period of reforms moved by Naqšbandī ideals and represented by the Gülhane Edict of 1839. The 1856 decree caused considerable opposition in Istanbul and in the provinces and led some to question of the legitimacy of Sultan Abdülmecid. The Islahat Fermanı and the Crimean War that preceded it, marked a turning point in inter-confessional relations in the empire. These two events figure predominantly in chronicles as the initial cause of tensions between Christians and Muslims.[2]

In this chapter, we will explore inter-confessional relations in this specific period. First, we will examine the context of the Crimean War and the drafting of the Islahat Fermanı. Secondly, we will analyse the precedent of the Egyptian rule of Damascus, which shaped the inhabitants' perception of the war and the reforms. Thirdly, we will explore the transformations of social hierarchies at play through the reforms. Finally, we will look into the consequence of the Crimean War and the Islahat Fermanı in *Bilād al-Šām* and the political relevance of feelings of collective humiliation in the outbreak of the violence.

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[1] Deringil, *The Well-Protected Domains*, 9-10.
[2] *Aḥwāl al-naṣār*ā, 5; Makāriyūs Šāhīn, *Ḥaṣr al-Liṯām 'an Nakbat al-Šām* (Cairo: Kutub Turath, 1895), 128; Mishāqah, *Murder, Mayhem*, 226.

1. Crimean war and the Islahat Fermanı

Following the Napoleonic wars in Europe, monarchic European powers reached a settlement in 1815 during the Congress of Vienna, aimed at reestablishing the balance of power between them and preventing further aggression. The Ottoman Empire was not present at the congress, yet it became subordinated to this system, occupying a strategic geographical position for the imperialist aims of European States.[3] The Vienna system however broke down in 1853 with the outbreak of the Crimean War between the Ottoman Empire and Russia. The war was fought under the pretext of the competition between the Russian Empire and France over the protection of Christians in the Ottoman Empire, and especially over the custody of the various Christian religious sites of Palestine.[4] This issue had given place to lengthy negotiations with both powers in the 1840's. After taking power in 1852, the French emperor Napoleon III sought to increase his popularity at home through renewing his claims over the holy places of Palestine.[5] The sultan agreed to French demands in 1852 and handed Catholics the keys of the Holy Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem while at the same time issuing a *ferman* to ensure that the Greek Orthodox would continue to enjoy the same rights as before.[6] These claims of protection were used as tools to justify Russian and French imperialism into the Ottoman Empire, thus upsetting the balance of power established by the Congress of Vienna thirty years earlier. Russia was unhappy about the victory of the French emperor and was sure that the Ottoman Empire was going to fall and that a solution had to be found regarding the division of its territories among the other European powers. These declarations worried the Ottoman government but also France, Great Britain and Austria over the intentions of the Russian emperor. It led to negotiations regarding the protection of Greek

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[3] Candan Badem. *The Ottoman Crimean War (1853-1856)* (Leiden: Brill, 2010) 46.
[4] Ibid, 4.
[5] Ibid, 66.
[6] Ibid, 65.

Orthodox Christians which lasted until 1853. The Russian representative, Alexander Menshikov, requested from the Ottoman government to be granted not only the custody of the holy places but also the official protection over all the Greek Orthodox in the Ottoman Empire. In case his demands were not agreed upon, he threatened to cut off diplomatic relationships.[7]

The Ottoman government did not cede to these demands as they would involve a considerable loss of jurisdiction over its subjects and contradicted the terms of the treaty of Kucuk Kaynarca signed in 1774 by the Ottoman Empire and Russia.[8] The foreign minister Reşid Paşa obtained assurance that France and Great Britain would defend the Ottoman Empire in case of Russian invasion. These two powers even sent fleets to the Dardanelles in preparation for that eventuality.[9] The Ottoman government drafted *ferman*-s safeguarding the rights of its Christians subjects according to tradition, in an attempt to win over their loyalty in the upcoming war.[10] Russia invaded the Danube Principalities in 1853, yet it did not immediately lead to war as the Great Powers attempted to find a compromise, known as the Turkish note. However, this attempt was unsuccessful as the Ottoman Empire and Russia did not back down from their positions.[11]

War was on the way, yet the Ottoman ministers continued to attempt to find a peaceful way out of this situation, as they feared the military might of the Russian Empire and were realistic about their lack of military preparedness. Public opinion however was rather pro-war and many saw in the approach of the government a sign of weakness.[12] Students of *madrasa*, and some among the ulema called for *ǧihād* against the Russian state. The religious student of *madrasa*, called *softas,* who aspired to become part of the ulema, wrote bold petitions to the government imposing war for the sultan as an integral duty of his claims to the title of *ʿāmīr*

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[7] Ibid, 76; Orlando Figes, *The Crimean War: A History (*York: Metropolitan Books 2010), 109.

[8] Badem, *The Ottoman Crimean War,* 77.

[9] Caroline Finkel, *Osman's Dream: The Story of the Ottoman Empire, 1300-1923* (New York: Basic Books, 2006), 457.

[10] Badem, *The Ottoman Crimean War,* 80.

[11] Ibid, 83.

[12] Ibid, 91.

al-mūʾminīn. The Ottoman ministers worried about the increasing involvement of the population in government affairs.[13] The ministers called a meeting with the ulema, mufti, admirals and other decision-makers to discuss whether the war should be declared or avoided. While some ministers stressed the ill-preparedness of the Ottoman army, the ulema and other ministers rather pointed to the necessity to declare war. They also argued that allying with Christian powers against another Christian state challenged the notion of *ǧihād.* In the end, the declaration of war was accepted by Sultan Abdülmecid in October 1853.[14] The Russian emperor Nikolai I in response declared war on the Ottoman Empire. The war started in the Danube on October 21st 1853 and officially ended with the signature of the Treaty of Paris in March 1856.[15]

These three years marked a turning point in the nature of inter-confessional relations in the empire but also in the shape of state-society relations. The Crimean War was for the first time conducted through military conscription and volunteering. In addition to joining the war effort, the population was well aware of all the developments of the conflict thanks to the involvement of new tools of communication such as newspapers, pamphlets, war photography, telegram and paintings. Because of these aspects, the Crimean war has often been referred to as the first modern war.[16] These various information mediums contributed to the politicization of the population and made the war central to popular political imagination and discourses even on the margins of the empire. An overwhelming Ottoman victory during the Crimean war could have fostered the legitimacy of the young Abdülmecid, whose popularity was low due to the fiscal and military reforms. Yet, while the Ottoman Empire did eventually win the war, it did so only thanks to the intervention of France and Great Britain. As military

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[13] Ibid, 93.
[14] Ibid, 97.
[15] Ibid, 98.
[16] Trudi Tate, *A Short History of the Crimean War* (London: I.B Tauris, 2019), 163.

advisers had predicted, the newly conscripted Ottoman army was not prepared enough to face the Russian forces.

The weakness of the Ottoman army was demonstrated early on. The battle of Sinop in 1853 imputed heavy losses on the Ottoman naval force, and marked the first victory of the Russian empire. French and British vessels were called to the rescue and entered the war against Russia.[17] All through the war, the Ottoman government tried to sign a peace treaty with Russia to prevent further losses, yet it met with the opposition of the *softalar*, ulema and *madrasa* students, who threatened the government to lead a public insurrection. The Ottoman government curbed the rebellion by arresting *softalar*.[18] The posture of negotiation that the sultan adopted was seen as a sign of weakness by the population and hurt his legitimacy as *ʿāmīr al-mūʾminīn*.

The war imputed heavy losses on the Ottoman army, not only because of the battles, but also because of famine, cold and diseases. Eventually, the French and British forces were able to repel the Russian army. France came out as the main victor of this war because of its triumph against the Russian troops in Sebastopol, which marked the end of the war.[19] Peace negotiations started in Paris in 1856, putting an end to the agreement of the Vienna Congress. The Congress of Paris secured the territorial integrity of the Ottoman Empire, which entered the Concert of Europe.[20] Yet, the Crimean war had been conducted through the granting of foreign loans to the empire, marking its endemic indebtedness to Europe.[21] In this context of foreign intervention in the empire, Sultan Abdülmecid published the Islahat Fermanı in 1856, granting equal rights to non-Muslims.[22] The origins of this decree and its intentions have been the subject of numerous contemporaneous debates but also contradictory interpretations

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[17] Badem, *The Ottoman Crimean War,*129.
[18] Ibid, 138, 139.
[19] Ibid, 286.
[20] Finkel, *Osman's Dream*, 458.
[21] Abu-Manneh, *Studies on Islam,* 113; Fatma Müge Göçek, *Rise of The Bourgeoisie, Demise of the Empire: Ottoman Westernization and Social Change (*New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 49.
[22] Finkel, *Osman's Dream*, 458.

in the scholarship. Was it drafted just to please foreign powers and to favor the Ottoman entry into the Concert of Europe? Or did it fulfill the objectives of wining the support of the Ottoman Christian population to avoid further separatist movements and repel Russian and French imperialist ambitions?[23] In this chapter, we will analyse the decree, its implications and consequences on inter-confessional relations.

The decree had various articles which transformed the place of non-Muslims in society. First of all, it declared the equality of all Ottoman subjects in front of taxation, putting an end to the collection of the *ğizya* from non-Muslim subjects. In exchange, the decree mentioned the equality of all subjects in front of conscription, which meant that Christians and Jews could now join the army.[24] While this stipulation did not really materialize, partly because of the opposition of patriarchs, officers and soldiers, it did mark a turning point in the state-society relations for the government had previously relied on its Muslims subjects to conduct warfare, which was consistent with legitimatizing of the wars as *ğiḥād*. The incorporation of Christians and Jews into the Ottoman army challenged the very basis of the war effort.[25]

A report from a special council of war in 1855, the *Meclis-i mahsus-i askeri,* highlights the difficulties and concerns of the government regarding universal conscription.[26] The question of loyalty was at the heart of the concerns of the decision makers. The *meclis* determined that non-Muslims should theoretically give 17500 soldiers but that in reality they would only be asked to give 3500 recruits annually and the rest would pay an exemption tax, the *bedel-i askeri* (also called *iane-i askeri*). The *bedel-i askeri* was also a tax that individual Muslims could pay instead of offering their service to the army. In each region, Muslim

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[23] Erik Jan Zürcher, *Turkey, a Modern History,* (London ; New York : I.B. Tauris : Distributed by St. Martin's Press, 1998), 58; Deringil, *The Well-Protected Domains,* 45.

[24] Jacob C. Hurewitz, ed. *The Middle East and North Africa in World politics (*New Haven: Yale University Press, 1975-79), vol. 1, 316-318.

[25] Odile Moreau, *L'Empire ottoman à l'âge des réformes. Les hommes et les idées du « Nouvel ordre militaire »,* *1826-1914* (Paris: Institut Français d'études Anatoliennes/Maisonneuve et Larosse, 2007*)*, 26.

[26] BOA, I.MMS.132.5647, June 5th 1855.

soldiers were recruited through lottery, and those who were called could either enter the army or pay the *bedel-i askeri*. In the case of non-Muslims however, they did not have the choice to serve and a certain amount of *bedel* was taken collectively on each community. It was justified by the fact that in some regions, war had created a lot of damages and resentments among Christians and thus if they were recruited from these places, there was a high risk of them escaping to join the opponent's camp.[27] The Ottoman army had witnessed such issues during the Crimean War when recruits from the Balkans escaped in front of battle.[28] The issue of doubtful loyalty can be observed in the discussion regarding non-Muslims forming independent blocks in the army. Should non-Muslims be dispatched into different battalions of the *nizamiye* army or should they be recruited as reserve militias? Should they be mixed with Muslims in blocks or have their own? While some argued that it would be easier for them to have their own battalions, other protested that this type of military organization might put the army at risk of treason and threatened its unity. A clear concern for the loyalty of those recruited interacted with a need to keep divisions within the army, which answered to the non-Muslim religious leadership's concerns but also the reticence of some Muslims soldiers to serve with non-Muslims.[29]

The *meclis* also discussed the different regions of the empire, in which Christians and Jews might be recruited or not, depending on the state of the administration, the loyalty of the population, the ethnicity of the Christians, and the advancement of conscription of Muslims there. Certain ethnicities were considered more reliable than others or more war-like.[30]

Then, an equally pressing problem was the financial void created by the abolition of the *ǧizya*, which had been used in many cases to finance the army. The army was in dire need

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[27] BOA, I.MMS.132.5647, June 5th 1855.
[28] Finkel, *Osman's dream,* 461.
[29] BOA, I.MMS.132.5647, June 5th 1855.
[30] BOA, I.MMS.132.5647, June 5th 1855, also in Moreau, *L'Empire ottoman à l'age des réformes,24,* 42.

of a new source of financing, and the *bedel-i askeri* was created with this aim in mind.[31] Although it was not imposed only on non-Muslims, this tax was explicitly mentioned in the *meclis* deliberations as a replacement of the *ǧizya*.[32] Yet, it was not just a continuation of the *ǧizya*, for groups who refused military service, such as some of the Druze in Syria, were also liable.[33] The exact status of this tax, its relation to the *ǧizya* and the populations that it concerned were points of contention that were the subject of long discussions.[34]

To ensure that Christians and Jews would indeed join the military service, the government thought to reassure religious leaders that special precautions would be taken for them to be able to practice their religious rites, and that priests and rabbis would be brought at each stop of the army. The Sabbath and religious holidays would also be observed by the recruits. The non-Muslim religious leaders might have been worried that military service would lead to too much intermingling and to a loss of control over their flocks. They also worried that they could not impose conscription on their flock. The *meclis* sought to put the religious and secular leaders in charge of determining who was fit for military service and thus to work as military contractors for their community.[35] In the end, the conscription of even 3500 soldiers agreed upon by the *Meclis i-Vala* encountered various oppositions and the *bedel-i askeri* was imposed generally instead.

The Islahat Fermanı, in addition to abolishing the *ǧizya* and imposing universal conscription, also highlighted freedom of religion and conversion. It also abolished restrictions associated with the *ḏimma* status such as sartorial laws or the punishment of blasphemy. It legally allowed non-Muslims to enter all the levels of the administration and the

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[31] BOA, I.MMS.132.5650, November 16th 1855.
[32] Ibid.
[33] A.E, 166/PO-Serie D/20, vol. 2, Beaudin-Roussin, April 12th 1839.
[34] A.E. 67/CPC/ vol 5-6, Outrey-Comte Walewski, August 16th 1856; Moshe Ma'oz, *Studies on Palestine During the Ottoman Period* (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1975), 22-25.
[35] BOA, I.MMS.132.5647, June 5th 1855.

army. Finally, the decree institutionalized the *millet* system in which non-Muslim communities were put under the authority of their communal leadership.[36]

There are conflicting narratives regarding the 1856 Islahat Fermanı because it had internal and external audiences. On the one hand, the decree was indeed influenced by foreign representatives. Lord Stratford Canning, the British ambassador to the Ottoman government participated in crafting the decree along Ali Paşa, the Ottoman delegate to the conference of Paris. It was then discussed by a council of Ottoman ministers. The participation of a foreign representative early on and the context of foreign intervention against Russia point to the possibility that the decree was written in part to please European powers. In the discussions regarding this decree, the Ottoman ministers insisted that this decree should not look like a victory for Europeans, but rather a favour to Christians in the empire.[37]

Yet, in addition to the obvious external dimension, it is important to highlight that the Islahat Fermanı decree had an internal audience, and was fulfilling internal purposes. Its main articles were not drafted solely for the Conference of Paris. It was the consequence of internal discussions before the Conference. For example, the aforementioned discussion of the *Meclis-i Vala* regarding the feasibility and practicalities of the recruitment of Christians and Jews in the army took place in 1855, before the end of the war.[38] The reforms were a solution to keep the Empire's territorial integrity and guarantee the loyalty of the Christian subjects of the Empire in the face of increasing foreign intervention on their behalf. It was sought to put an end to foreign intervention in the empire by lifting the causes of discontent of its Christian constituents.[39]

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[36] Stamatopolous, "From Millets to Minorities," 259.

[37] Candan Badem, *"The Question of the Equality of Non-Muslims in the Ottoman Empire during the Crimean War (1853–1856)"*, in *The Crimean War 1853–1856. Colonial Skirmish or Rehearsal for World War? Empires, Nations, and Individual*s, ed. Jerzy W. Borejsza (Warsaw: Wydawnictwo Neriton Instytut Historii PAN, 2011), 79-80.

[38] BOA. I.MMS. 132. 5647, June 5th 1855; I.MMS.132 5650, November 16th 1855.

[39] Badem, *"The Question of the Equality"*, 79-80.

The Islahat Fermanı introduced a completely different basis of state-society relations in the Ottoman Empire. It contrasted with the decree of 1839 which was clothed in a return to the Islamic tradition. This contrast can be explained by the factional change in Istanbul. The Crimean War indeed marked a break with the arrival to power of different individuals, who were not moved by Naqšbandī ideas, such as Fuad, Ali Paşa and members of the Palace faction.[40] They drafted the 1856 decree. These two aids of Mustafa Reşid Pasha took over and monopolized posts of responsibility in the government.[41] The previous diplomatic approach, represented by Reşid Pasha, had failed to prevent the war and was thus delegitimized.[42] Key members of the Naqšbandīya among bureaucrats and ulema lost their positions. The Naqšbandī *Šayḫ al-Islām* Arif Hikmet bey was fired from the position of Grand Vizier in 1854.[43] Sadik Rifat was also dismissed in 1854.[44]

Both groups of statesmen saw the necessity of reforming the empire, however they had different objectives of reforms. On the one hand, for the bureaucrats around Mustafa Reşid Pasha, the observation of religious precepts and the strengthening of the bureaucratic apparatus was a way to return to a more glorious time. On the other hand, Ali and Fuad Paşa did not want religious restrictions to hinder the exercise of state power. They saw the army as the main institution that should run the empire. Ali and Fuad Paşa accumulated various positions within the state, increasing their monopoly on the decision-making process and gave a secondary role to ulema and judges.[45] While the Naqšbandīya had been favored previously as a way to reform the state and to foster loyalty, Ali and Fuad Paşa rather turned to their

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[40] Abu-Manneh, *Studies on Islam,* 106, 109.
[41] Ibid, 113.
[42] Badem, *The Ottoman Crimean War,* 79.
[43] Abu-Manneh, *Studies on Islam,* 106.
[44] Ibid, 106, 109.
[45] Abu-Manneh, *The Islamic Roots,* 202; Abu-Manneh, *The Later Tanzimat,* 70.

opponents, the Mevlevi and Bektaşi orders, who had been overshadowed by the Naqšbandīya in the first part of the 19th century.[46]

Contrary to the 1839 Gülhane edict which had benefited from a wide support among government officials, the 1856 aroused passionate oppositions from bureaucrats.[47] Reşid Pasha, who had been instrumental in crafting the 1839 decree, wrote a *layiha*[48] to the Sultan criticizing the reforms.[49] The newly appointed *Šayḫ al-Islām* managed to give legitimacy to its most game-changing article, the abolition of the *ğizya*, by looking into early Islamic history and the agreement stroke by ʿUmar ibn al-Ḫaṭṭāb with the Bani Ṭālib Christians who did not have to pay *ğizya* but simply paid double the amount of the tax imposed on Muslims. The *Šayḫ al-Islām* thought that if the name *ğizya* was stroke and replaced by *iane i-askeri* or *bedel i-askeri*, both foreign powers and Ottoman subjects would be contented.[50] Yet, while this name change was sought to be cosmetic only, it bore important meaning to the population. It came to be perceived not only as a privilege given to Christians but also as a victory of Europe, as ministers dreaded.[51] Christians were seen as obtaining new rights and at the same time being freed from their obligations.

In addition, there was no effort at explaining the Islahat Fermanı of 1856. The interpretations effort of the *Šayḫ al-Islām* to legitimize the transformation through Islamic law were not given publicity. The decree was imposed but not explained, thus hindering its acceptance by the population.[52] This pedagogic failure is reminiscent of the reforms promulgated under Selim III (1789-1807). He enacted a series of fiscal, administrative and diplomatic reforms. He opened Ottoman embassies in the major capitals of Europe. He had

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[46] Abu-Manneh, *The Islamic Roots,* 202; Abu-Manneh, *The Later Tanzimat,* 72; Abu-Manneh*, Studies on Islam,* 128.
[47] Finkel, *Osman's Dream*, 459.
[48] Treatrise
[49] Badem, *The Ottoman Crimean War, 346.*
[50] Candan Badem, "The Question of the Equality", 81-83.
[51] Finkel, *Osman's Dream*, 459.
[52] Recep Senturk, "Intellectual Dependency: Late Ottoman Intellectuals between Fiqh and Social Science", *Die Welt des Islams* 47, no. 3-4. (2007): 293.

also planned to reform the military establishment and created a new infantry corps the *nizam i-cedid,* trained by European officers with European weapons and techniques. It was recruited from among the Muslim youth of Anatolia, contrary to the *devşirme* system which was based on the forced recruitment of Christian youth from the Balkans. The Janissaries, issued from the *devşirme* system, saw in the *nizam-i cedid* a threat to their institution and rose in rebellion against the sultan and ultimately murdered him. They also resented the influence of France over the sultan. Selim III's reforms were perceived as illegitimate and ultimately criticized as against Ottoman tradition and Islamic law.[53]

2. Precedent of Egyptian Rule: Shaping the Understanding of the Reforms

Local contexts shaped the interpretation of imperial transformations. The Egyptian rule of Damascus (1831-1841) affected how Damascenes perceived the Islahat Fermanı. Indeed, resentments among Damascenes regarding the place of Christians in the empire were intrinsically linked to their role during the Egyptian rule.

The ulema of the city, among others, had predominantly negative assessments of the Egyptian rule. While some of them had allied with the Egyptians at first, towards the end of the rule, they ended up dissatisfied by the measures taken by the rulers. Ibrāhīm ʿAlī adopted symbolic measures against the ulema. For example, he requested mosques and Quranic schools and used them as barracks for soldiers, animal feeding places or biscuit factories. Most of these mosques were situated in the Maydān and Qanawāt[54] neighborhoods, home of the two main political factions of the city.[55] The first was the general quarter of the local popular ulema and the second was the residence of numerous elite ulema and notables. Both

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[53] Moreau, *L'Empire ottoman à l'âge des réformes*, 16.
[54] See map in Annex 1.
[55] Muḥammad Ğamīl al-Šaṭṭī, *Rafad al-bašir fī aʿyān dimašq fī al-qarn al-ṯālaṯ ʿašr 1200 H.-1300 H.,* Damascus: Dār al-yaqḏā al-ʿarabīya, 1943, 12-19; Weber, *Ottoman Damascus,* vol. 1, 116.

neighborhood hosted the influential individuals of the city.[56] These symbolic policies ended up alienating all political factions of the city.

The Egyptian rule also led to the transformation of the hierarchies and the loss of privileges of the *āšrāf*. The descendants of the Prophet Muḥammad benefited from the status of *šarīf, p. āšrāf*. In Damascus there were 26 *āšrāf* families.[57] This status granted them tax exemption, dispense from military service and a specific role in society. Instead of the *qāḍī* court, they were judged by a court presided by their representative, the *naqīb al-āšrāf*.[58] They also had their specific guilds. They had preferential access to a variety of positions such as *qāḍī*, mufti, *madrasa* teacher, supervisor of the *waqf*, shaykh of *ṭarīqa* or *naqīb al-āšrāf*.[59] They were also often in charge of managing the *āwqāf*.[60] This special status however was challenged by the *Tanzimat* reforms. Already in the 18th century, the governor of the city, Cezzar Ahmed Paşa, had dealt the first blow to this status group by choosing himself the *naqīb*, executing some *āšrāf* of the city and confiscating the belongings of those among them who were involved in trade. They were jailed, tortured and forced to hand over their resources to win their freedom.[61]

During the Egyptian rule (1832-1841), Ibrāhīm ʿAlī dealt the final blow to the *āšrāf* by changing the rules of the tax-farming, or *iltizam*, of the imperial *miri* lands which affected them directly. He also chose his own favorites to the positions of *qāḍī* and *madrasa* teachers and tried to distance the *āšrāf* from these positions. Finally, he abolished their privileges.[62] Some see in the events of 1860 a revenge of the *āšrāf* towards their loss of position during the Egyptian rule.[63]

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[56] *Muḏakkirāt tārīḫīya*, 65-66.
[57] Ibid, 448-450.
[58] Yūsuf Ǧamīl Naʿīsa, *Muǧtamaʿ Madīna Dimašq 1772–1840,* vol. 2 (Damascus: Dar Tlas, 1994), 448; Khoury, *Urban notables,* 14.
[59] Naʿīsa, *Muǧtamaʿ,* 455.
[60] Ibid, 454.
[61] Ibid, 456.
[62] Ibid, 453.
[63] Ibid, 453.

In terms of political administration, the Egyptians set up a *maǧlis* instead of the *dīwān* existing beforehand. The *dīwān* was previously composed of ulema and *ʿayān*. Although ulema were present in the new *maǧlis*, their role was diminished compared to the *dīwān*. The few ulema who sat in the *maǧlis* and showed their loyalty to the Egyptians, as the *ʿayān*, saw their situation improving as they reached high positions in the administration.[64] The new *maǧlis* was composed mainly of notables and property-owners as well as non-Muslim representatives. Christians and Jews were officially incorporated into the decision making process.[65] Ibrāhīm ʿAlī left a Greek Catholic, Buṭrus Karamā, in charge of organizing the *maǧlis* while he left to Homs.[66] The Egyptians favored the recruitment of Christians in the financial administration.[67] The Greek Catholic Ḥannā Bīk Baḥrī, occupied a predominant position in the *maǧlis*. His colleagues were not found of him because they considered that his considerable influence in the decision-making process was not legitimate. Rumors had it that he was the real ruler of *Bilād al-Šām*. He received all the honors and public rewards.[68] The fact that the financial department was handled almost exclusively by Christians,[69] coupled with the tax increases of the Egyptians, diverted popular resentments against the Egyptian rule towards Christians.

We have seen that Christians and Jews had reached such positions of the power in the 18th, yet these nominations were not seen as a question of balance of power between Christians and Muslims and thus did not meet with the same reactions. With the Egyptian rule, the idea that Christians could overpower Muslims was increasingly seen as a real threat. The actions of Christians elites were no longer perceived on the individual level but rather

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[64] Commins, *Islamic Reform*, 12.
[65] A.E. 67/CPC, vol.1, Ratti-Menton-Guizot, January 18th 1841.
[66] al-Qasāṭlī, *al-Rawḍa,* 89.
[67] *Muḏakkirāt tārīḫīya*, 59
[68] Ibid.
[69] Yitzhak Hofman,"The Administration under Egyptian Rule," in *Studies on Palestine During the Ottoman Period*, ed. Moshe Maʿoz (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1975), 326.

represented the role/power of the whole community. It points to the rise of a sectarian interpretation of local events and individual actions.

The public attitude towards the Egyptians also revolved around their politics in the city. They introduced various administrative, political and economic reforms. The introduction of universal taxation based on individuals rather than groups, was one of the most hated measures.[70] The population also suffered economically in this period because of the war with the Ottoman government but also because of these new taxes.[71]

Ibrāhīm ʿAlī attempted to yield to his power all the semi-autonomous groups of the countryside of *Bilād al-Šām*. He sent Druze into exile, subjugated Bedouins, and led an attack on other groups such as the Alawis. He attempted to restrict the autonomy of para-military groups such as deli forces and *tufenkciler,[72]* by incorporating them into the army and by imposing the disarming of the population and other irregular military groups.[73]

Animosities towards the Egyptian rulers shaped discourses regarding the Christian elite, which came to be associated with the Egyptians. This perceived closeness between the Egyptians and Christians was caused by international dynamics, such as the support of France to Muḥammad 'Alī against the Ottoman government, but also by more local dynamics. Ibrāhīm ʿAlī was seen as allying with Christians against Muslims. Symbolically, the alliance was represented by the arrival in Damascus of Christians of Mount Lebanon riding on horses as part of Egyptian forces.[74] This was a strong image which shocked the population. Some Damascene Christians had welcomed them with excitement. The Egyptian regime also used Christian forces of Mount Lebanon to collect taxes in a context of rebellion which increased resentment towards them.[75] In the sectarian interpretations of these dynamics, foreigners and

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[70] Ḫālid Banī Hānī, *Tārīḫ Dimašq wa ʿulamāʾuhā ḫilāl al- ḥukm al-Misʿrī, 1831-1840* (Damascus: Dār Safahʾāt, 2007), 191; Masters, *Christians and Jews,* 135.
[71] Ibid, 135.
[72] Ottoman riflemen
[73] Dick Douwes, *The Ottomans in Syria, A History of Justice and Oppression* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2000), 130.
[74] Commins, *Islamic Reform*, 10.
[75] *Muḏakkirāt tārīḫīya*, 55.

Ottoman Christians were seen as the cause of all changes introduced by the Egyptians and especially conscription.[76] When Egyptian troops were defeated in their attempt to recruit the Druze in the Ḥawrān in 1838, the Damascenes took advantage of the situation to insult the soldiers together with Christians and foreigners, thereby pointing to popular perception of an Egyptian alliance with Christians.[77] The famous *ʿālim* Muḥammad Āmin ibn ʿĀbidīn criticized the Egyptian rule mostly because he argued that it benefited only non-Muslims, who took advantage of the situation to defy Muslims.[78] He also mentioned that non-Muslims had united against Muslims during the Egyptian rule.[79] The Egyptian divide and rule policies, instrumentalizing one religious group against another, thereby contributed to the politicization of religious identities in Mount Lebanon and in Damascus.

In addition to structural changes introduced to the city of Damascus, the public displays of loyalty of some Christians towards the Egyptians through parades entrenched the perception of their betrayal of Ottoman authority. The victory of the Egyptians against the sultan's army at the beginning of the rule encouraged Christians to stage a parade in the city. According to the Christian author of *Muḏakirāt Tariḫīyya*, this was done by the 'ignorants'[80] among the Christians who decorated a camel and put a Muslim on it, they decorated it with bottles of arak and crosses. They sung songs such as "Ibrāhīm Paša yā Manṣūr, Allah yalʿan al Maqhūr", translating to "Oh Ibrāhīm Pasha the victorious, may God destroy the curses ones" which Muslims understood as a reference to themselves. Christians notables forbade this parade but when the 'ignorants' asked the deputy governor for his authorization, he gave it to them. The itinerary they traced in the city reveals the audience of this procession. They started by Bāb Šarqī,[81] composed of a mixed population but home to churches and synagogues, then

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[76] A.E, 166/PO-Serie D/20, vol. 2, Beaudin-Roussin, May 2nd 1838.
[77] A.E, 166/PO-Serie D/20, vol. 2, Beaudin-Roussin, March 9th 1838.
[78] Weismann, *Sufism on the Eve of Reform*, 72.
[79] Ibn ʿĀbidīn, *Radd al-muḥtār,* vol. 6, *336.*
[80] In line with interpretations of popular violence by the elites, see Makdisi, "Corrupting the Sublime Sultanate," 199.
[81] See the map of Damascus in Annex 1.

went towards the marketplace to end up in Surūǧīya and came back from ʿAmārā, Māzz al-Kasāb which are Muslim majority neighborhoods of industry and commerce, to finally return to Bāb Tūmā. They thus passed through the main markets of the town and circled around the city center. When inhabitants of Surūǧīya closed the neighbourhood doors to prevent them from entering, the Christian paraders managed to get the deputy governor to open it by force and sent to prison the shaykh of the neighbourhood. They were under the influence of alcohol and regretted it afterwards.[82] The author of *Muḏakirāt Tariḫīyya* suspected the deputy governor Aḥmad Paša al-Yūsuf to have favoured such a procession to push Damascenes to rebel against the Egyptians.[83] Such processions in the cities, passing by the different neighborhood of the city, were part of the traditions of Damascene societies. They took place for a variety of reasons, such as religious holidays, but also for the marriage of sultans, the birth of their children or their military victories.[84] However, this parade was quite different as it celebrated the defeats of the Ottoman government.

After another victory of Ibrāhīm ʿAlī in Konya some Christians again paraded in the city with arak and with their finest clothes saying ' Pray to Jesus! Who can stand against us! Our swords are drawn! The Lord is with us!".[85] In 1833, after the signature of the treaty of Kütahya between the Egyptian and Ottoman armies, the same group of Christians staged a parade around the city, this time however they entered inside the city center, in the artisan neighbourhood of Qaymayrīya and the markets of Buzūrīya[86] close to the Omayyad Mosque.[87] These parades were thus displays of strengths and provocation towards the Muslims of the city, especially merchants. They were also displays of loyalty towards the

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[82] *Muḏakkirāt tārīḫīya,* 72, 73.

[83] Ibid.

[84] Mathieu Eychenne, "La nuit mamelouke. Contribution à l'histoire du quotidien au Caire et à Damas à la fin du Moyen Âge," *Revue des mondes musulmans et de la Méditerranée* 136 (November 2014): 38; See also Louis Pouzer, *Damas au VIIe/XIIIe siècle. Vie et structures religieuses dans une métropole islamique* (Beirut: Dâr al-Machreq, 1991).

[85] *Muḏakkirāt tārīḫīya,* 79.

[86] See map in Annex 1.

[87] Ibid, 82.

Egyptian regime. Later on, when discussions regarding the freedom of procession for Christians and Jews took place, this precedent of political parades was in the everyone's minds. These events also point to the increasing inability of the elite to impose their authority on the commoners and act as intermediaries to diffuse conflicts.

The Egyptian period, through its symbolic transformations, marks a turning point for inter-confessional relations. It is not surprising to find among the attackers of the Christian quarter in 1860 mentions of a need for revenge for the Egyptian period. Indeed, a merchant declared that Muslims had suffered enough under the Egyptians and that Christians had to be punished for this reason.[88] Violence towards Christians already took place during the Egyptian rule. An anonymous Christian chronicler wrote that in this period, a coffee-place in Bāb Tūmā filled with Christians playing music had been attacked. The attack started by a threat against Christians and an affirmation that this favorable situation towards them will never last. The author also mentioned popular mobilization in support of the Ottomans which targeted Bāb Tūmā, a Christian quarter, pointing to the association made between Christians and the Egyptians.[89] Because the French government had supported the Egyptians, and because of the central role of Greek Catholics, Catholic institutions were the targeted.[90] For example, in 1841 a project was discussed to destroy the Greek Catholic church built in the Egyptian period. The governor heard about it and immediately sent his irregular troops to protect it.[91]

3. World Upside Down

The changes introduced by the decree of 1856 were perceived as a complete reconstruction of the social order. These transformations were understood through the prism of the changes introduced by the Egyptian rule, which were both sudden and brutal. The

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[88] Fawaz, *An Occasion for War,* 85.
[89] Banī Hānī, *Tārīḫ Dimašq,* 156; *Muḏakkirāt tārīḫīya,* 64.
[90] Banī Hānī, *Tārīḫ Dimašq,* 158.
[91] A.E. 67/CPC, vol. 1, Ratti-Menton-Guizot, January 6th 1841.

Egyptian rule also created the impression of a zero-sum game, in which success and victory of Christians meant an automatic loss for Muslims. For the inhabitants of Damascus, the reforms represented a world upside down. Christians and Jews who had been tributary subjects were now put on an equal footing with Muslims. Because of the unprecedented aspect of the Islahat Fermanı, it has come to the forefront as the defining decree of the *Tanzimat* period. However, for Ottoman subjects the decree of 1856 was only part of a larger transformation of state-society relationships, which tended to abolish not only the privileges of Muslims in an Islamic state, but rather the whole range of privileges and exemptions awarded to various status groups which had been the basis of Ottoman society.[92] The statesmen who drafted the reforms did not aim to abolish all social hierarchies. On the contrary, they emphasized the importance of respecting one's status in society. Yet, the reforms by by-passing intermediaries and centralizing power did give rise to consistent and at times violent challenges to privileges and inequality of statuses. The reforms were understood by some as instituting a complete equality among all Ottoman subjects.[93]

Indeed, the Ottoman reforms aimed at improving the management of resources, which it was increasingly lacking, through a direct intervention into fields which had been delegated to a vast array of intermediaries. In addition, it was coupled with a centralization of political power which aimed at preventing challenges to the central government from within the Ottoman state structure. While in the 18th century, the Ottoman government had adopted the strategy of trading autonomy of local power-holders for loyalty and revenue, in the 19th century, the state had to encompass the various functions which had been assumed by these intermediaries. This process was especially visible in the management of taxation and land ownership.

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[92] Such as tax exemptions, legal exemptions, rights to wear specific colors, rights of property or access to resources.

[93] Makdisi, *Culture of Sectarianism*, 105; Finkel, *Osman's Dream*, 458; Stanford J. Shaw, "The Nineteenth-Century Ottoman Tax Reforms and Revenue System," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 6, no. 4 (1975): 421-59. Hill, "How global was the age of revolution?," 12.

Taxation had been an accurate representation of the hierarchy of Ottoman society. The taxation of *ancient régime* was perceived as a sort of tribute, which explains why elites including members of the *askeri* or *ilmiye* group were exempted. Tax exemption was a privilege granted to allies and clients in exchange for loyalty or other service to the state. It was granted graciously from the sultan and could be revoked. Those elites who had enjoyed these tax exemptions beforehand were now gradually called to participate financially in the empire, thus loosing this status which made them part of the state apparatus. Those who had seen themselves as part of the state were gradually affiliated with the *reaya* rather than the *askeri* or *ilmiye* status group. The term *reaya* had been applied to tax-paying individuals, that is the general population including Muslims and non-Muslims. Those groups who had seen themselves as part of the state were thus estranged and lowered to the status of simple subject, just as non-elite Muslims, Christians and Jews.

At the same time however, because of universal conscription, all Muslims could be recruited into the army and thus were increasingly considered as members of the *askeri* group, albeit without any of its former privileges. As it was widened, the *askeri* class lost its privilege status. In this way, the status of all Muslims was somewhat equalized. If non-Muslims would have joined the army, they would have entered the *askeri* class as well, thus equalizing the status of all Ottoman subjects. In the end however, their participation into the army was halted, and they were instead asked to pay a tax, the *bedel i-askeri*. This failure to participate in the war effort, due to circumstances meant that they did not enter the *askeri* class but rather were stuck into the *reaya* class. *Reaya* increasingly came to mean non-Muslim.[94] The status of Muslims was equalized while non-Muslims were pointed to as others. The hierarchical structure of the Ottoman State had previously allowed for a variety of

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[94] The vocabulary used in the orders of the government point to their vision of society, the statesman Ali Aşkar Paşa, when discussing taxation stated that both "Muslim and *reaya* of Damascus provide equipment and necessities for the soldiers" « ahl-i islam ve reayasinin gerek asker tecviz ve tertibinde » in BOA, I.DH.295.1858 March 24th 1854,

cross-cutting cleavages and status groups which blurred the divisions between Muslims and non-Muslims, privileging the distinction between elite and non-elite.[95] In the 19ᵗʰ century, because of the leveling of the distinction between elite and non-elite, the religious division became more salient and came to define one's relationship to the state.[96]

In the context of the city of Damascus, the *Tanzimat* and the abolition of the privileges of certain social groups together with the equality granted to non-Muslims starting with the Egyptian period were perceived not as an act of justice but as the world upside down, as a sort of positive discrimination, where those on the lower level of society were now promoted to its higher echelons. The *āmīn al-fatwā* Muḥammad Āmīn ibn ʿĀbidīn wrote a poem complaining about the bad time in which he lived where the low became high and vice versa.[97] It was seen as a proof of the downfall of the social order, but also of morality which became symbolized by the increasing public visibility of women and *ḏimmīs*. Attacks on morality were also linked to the new freedom of Christians and foreign intervention. In 1845, individuals fought each other in front of the taverns operated by the dragoman of the Greek consulate. The French consul mentioned that the consumption of wine was already hated by the Muslims inhabitants but it was even more unbearable as it was operated by a protégé of the Greek consulate, originating from the Islands and dressed as European. In his opinion, the behavior of these foreign Greeks reflected badly on Europeans.[98] Saʾīd al-Usṭwānī mentioned that in 1859 there was a rumour that the inhabitants of the city were increasingly turning to drinking alcohol and causing problems because many Christians opened taverns.[99]

The new class of Christian merchants which had developed thanks to their interaction with foreign houses of commerce, trade with Europe or their positions in the administration of

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[95] Makdisi, *Artillery of Heaven,* 36; Makdisi, *Culture of Sectarianism*, 6; See Tezcan, "Ethnicity, race".
[96] Fuat Dundar,"Empire of Taxonomy: Ethnic and Religious Identities in the Ottoman Surveys and Censuses," *Middle Eastern Studies*, 51 (2015): 146, 147; Makdisi, *Culture of Sectarianism,* 46.
[97] Ibn ʿAbīdīn, *Radd al-muḥtār*, vol. 6, 336.
[98] A.E, 166/PO-Serie D/20, vol. 2, Tippel- Bourquency, August 1ˢᵗ 1845.
[99] al-Usṭwānī, *Mašāhid,* 168.

governors came to represent this world upside-down. Not only did these merchant build luxurious houses and dress accordingly, but they also benefited from the protection of foreign powers and thus often escaped taxation. Their situation was not seen as a consequence of equality but rather of their monopolizing politico-economic privileges.

Clothing was an important marker of distinction in the Ottoman Empire. The changes introduced to the clothing patterns during the *Tanzimat* reforms represented this transformation of the social order. During the *Tanzimat* reform period in the Ottoman Empire, clothing became an important tool of social change and the focus of power struggles. The turban and its colors, shapes, and accessories that represented different levels of the social hierarchy was gradually replaced by a universal headgear, the *ṭarbūš*. It came to illustrate the downfall of the ancient-regime. It also pointed to the development of a new horizontal citizenship called Ottomanism, in which all citizens were theoretically at equi-distance to the state. Visual distinctions between officials and subjects but also between religious groups were to be diminished.[100] The decree of 1856 abolished clothing distinctions between religious groups, which meant that the clothing of non-Muslims were not to be restricted anymore. Thus, Christians and Jews could wear certain colors previously reserved for Muslims such as green. Interestingly, in Damascus many Christians wished to continue marking their religious identity even in the face of the abolition of clothing restrictions, for example by adapting the *ṭarbūš*[101] by adding a *mandīl*[102] to it, or with a yellow scarf wrapped around it to show their distinctiveness from Muslims.[103]

The same feeling of loss was shared through all the echelons of the social hierarchy. For example, the elites which had enjoyed power until the mid-19th century, such as the *ʿayān* or military leaders, now had to share their economic and political monopolies with a new

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[100] Quataert, "Clothing Laws," 403-404.
[101] Brimless cap.
[102] Handkerchief.
[103] Naʿīsa, *Muǧtamaʿ*, 625.

class of civil servants who owed their career to their education in new institutions (*mekteb-i harbiye*, etc) who formed bureaucrats and military leaders. They climbed the social ladder through other routes than the traditional client-patron relationships, which had ensured the centralization of power. Their promotion to the elite rank of the Ottoman government was considered as illegitimate by those who saw their privileges escape them.[104] Then, the same dynamic is observable among Christians. Greek Orthodox, who had previously been represented at the higher echelons of the social order and saw themselves as the elite of Christians complained that they were now at the same level than Jews.[105] The transformation of the economic and social structure was resented by those who saw their privileges escape them.[106] In the political imagination of Ottoman subjects, the sultan was responsible for maintaining the social order, as well as the economic structure and good government.

4. Consequence of the Crimean War and the 1856 Decree in *Bilād al-Šām*

4.1 Inter-confessional Tensions

How were the war and the following Islahat Fermanı perceived in *Bilād al-Šām*? The experiences of the war differed according to the provinces and the social group. In Damascus, the war was seen as a catastrophe and was not welcome with fervent calls for *ǧihād*, except among the Kurdish Naqšbandī community, which sent many volunteers.[107] This chapter will look at the social, political consequences of the war in a specific place by relying mostly on contemporary chronicles, and consular reports. These points of view allow us to determine the effects of the war based on the local context, while the secondary literature tends to focus on the reaction in Istanbul. What did the war mean for local Muslims and Christians, for consuls and governors? How did these interpretations shape inter-confessional relations?

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[104] Moreau, *L'Empire ottoman à l'âge des réformes*, 206.
[105] Ismael Kara, "Turban and fez: *ulema* as opposition," in *Late Ottoman Society: The Intellectual Legacy,* ed. Elizabeth Özdalga (London/New York: SOAS/ RoutledgeCurzon Studies on the Middle East, 2005), 183.
[106] Finkel, *Osman's Dream*, 459.
[107] Riedler*," Opposition to the Tanzimat state," 39.*

The author of *Aḥwāl al-naṣārā* explained that Muslims in Damascus were against the war because they could not see any benefit to it.[108] The war was only going to extend the conscription to a larger part of the population. The author mentions that already during the premises of the war, attitudes towards Christians were becoming more and more hostile, including insults.[109] Indeed, Christians were blamed for the outbreak of the hostilities between Russia and the Ottoman Empire because Russia claimed it was acting for their benefit. The author was convinced that the Ottoman government held rancor towards Christians because of the war.[110] In addition, Muslims were the only ones who had to bear the cost of the war by sending soldiers to the front. The Islahat Fermanı which followed the war also met with strong resentment on the part of the Muslim population. It was read publicly in the *mağlis* to which consuls were invited. The French consul mentioned that the members of the *mağlis* saw it as a result of the insisting of foreign powers and a victory for Christians over Muslims and Islam itself.[111]

The fact that the Ottoman Empire had been saved by European armies during the Crimean War was considered by some as a humiliation because it revealed the weakness of the empire and its subservient position to the Great Powers. It also emphasized the strength of European powers and indirectly of Ottoman Christians. As a consequence, consuls and ambassadors became bolder in their demands and in relation to the local Muslim population. The French consul in Beirut started to behave arrogantly after the war, asking for Muslims to stand up in front of him and punishing them when they did not comply. Some consuls also took the liberty of giving orders to notables.[112] The role of the consuls indeed changed after the Crimean war as they became more active to extend their jurisdiction and power on the ground. The changing balance of power between consuls and governors was apparent.

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[108] *Aḥwāl al-naṣārā*, 5.
[109] *Aḥwāl al-naṣārā*,. 5, 29.
[110] *Aḥwāl al-naṣārā*, 5.
[111] AE. 18/PO/serie A, vol. 9, Outrey-Walewski, May 28th 1856.
[112] Šāhīn, *Ḥaṣr al-Liṯām*, 128, 129.

Consuls repeatedly obtained the dismissal of governors who did not fit their interests.[113] When the new British consul James Brant arrived in Damascus in 1858, he demanded to be able to fly the British flag. The French consul Max Outrey advised him against it and explained to him that Muslims didn't forgive the superiority of foreigners over them, and even less the privileges that foreign powers managed to obtain for Christians, creating resentments in the Muslim population. Outrey warned the British consul Brant that showing the British flag would cause a humiliation of the Muslim population of city and would lead to a strong reaction.[114] The chronicler Macārīyūs Šāhīn mentioned that following the war, those who were discontented by this situation attempted to oppress all those who seemed to have favored or were associated with foreigners. There was a backlash against Christians and foreign consuls in the city, blamed for the war and for its outcome.[115] During and after the war, tensions were high against foreign agents across *Bilād al-Šām*. There were petitions written to the Ottoman government to get rid of foreign consulates in the city.[116] It led to a events of violence against Christians and foreigners.[117]

The decree of 1856 mentioned that foreigners could now buy land in the empire, marking a break not only with previous legislation but with Islamic jurisprudence which prevented a *mustʾamīn* from possessing land. Land possession was indeed a prerogative of *ḏimmīs* and Muslims.[118] This transformation was seen by some as the prelude of the territorial conquest of foreign countries over the empire.[119] In chronicles, the idea that Europeans were taking power in some regions such as Mount Lebanon was present. They report the fear

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[113] A.E. 67/CPC, vol. 2, Vallegue-de la Hitte, September 6th 1850 and August 18th 1850; al-Usṭwānī, *Mašāhid*, 580; BOA, I.MVL.212.6956, June 9Th 1851.
[114] A.E. 67/CPC, vol. 5/6, Outrey- Walewski, March 31st 1858.
[115] Ibid*,* 128.
[116] F.O. 195/368, Wood-Stratford de Redcliffe, July 13th 1853.
[117] *Aḥwāl al-naṣārā*, 5.
[118] Fawaz, *An Occasion for War,* 68-69.
[119] Šāhīn, *Ḥaṣr al-Liṯām, 129.*

among Muslims of passing under a *Frenj* government and link this fear to the violence of 1860.[120]

Chroniclers agree that at that point, confident that they all benefited from the protection of foreign powers, Christians were no longer cautious not to provoke the rest of the population. They thus started to invest the public space and engage in behaviors which they would have kept private before hand. The frontier between public and private behavior was erased. They engaged in public drinking and interactions between men and women deemed inappropriate by the local population. The Christian chroniclers were quite critical of their coreligionists' behaviors, usually presented as the work of commoners.[121] The French consul advised Christians to refrain from acts of provocation, and lamented the imprudent actions of some of them who insisted on demonstrating their triumph over Muslims.[122] Yet foreign protection was unable to protect Christians from attacks, all it could do was to obtain retribution afterwards. Chroniclers mention that those who had been favourable to equality between religious groups started to resent it, especially from among the non-elites.[123]

The French consul was quite worried about the repeated occurrence of fights between Christians and Muslims in the streets of Damascus. He mentions that the same issues were taking place in Homs and that the French inhabitants of the city fled and came to Damascus. Various Christian bishops also wrote a petition demanding the help of the French consul to ensure their protection in these troubled times.[124] Yet the governor Mahmud Paşa was quite active and managed to maintain social peace through a firm attitude.[125]

The press had played a large role in spreading the news of violence and aggression towards foreign agents all over the empire. The press was developed in the 18th century and

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[120] Ibid, 129, 239.
[121] Iskandar Abkāriyūs, *Kitāb Nawādir al-zamān fī waqāʾiʿ ǧabal Lubnān*, ed. ʿAbd al-Karīm Al-Samak (London Riyad el-Reyyes Books, 1987), 253-256.
[122] AE. 18/PO/Serie A, vol. 9, Outrey-Walewski, May 28th 1856.
[123] Abkāriyūs, *Kitāb Nawādir,* 253-256.
[124] AE. 18/PO/Serie A, vol. 9, Outrey-Walewski, May 28th 1856.
[125] AE. 18/PO/Serie A, vol. 9, Outrey-Waleski, May 28th 1856.

by the mid-19ᵗʰ century journals based in Beirut were operating, as well as presses in Alexandria and Malta run by Protestant missionaries. These journals, such as *Ḥadīqāt al-Āḫbār,* reported world events as well as local happenings. As Benedict Anderson explains in his seminal work *Imagined Communities*, the press was a fundamental tool of the construction of nationalism, as it allowed the development of a conscience of commonality among inhabitants of the same region who had previously thought of themselves as part of villages, or region but not as belonging to the same fatherland. In the case of *Bilād al-Šām*, the participation of the press in the creation of a public sphere can also be observed.[126] This public sphere became increasingly polarized as rumors and sectarian discourses circulated across the region. This circulation of news was also facilitated by the introduction of the telegram and the steam boat which made news reach the ends of the empire much faster. It contributed to the confessionalization of the society in the region as the population was increasingly politicized through this information network. Articles published in Europe which provided negative views of the Ottoman Empire and Muslims also circulated, feeding tensions and resentment at Europeans and Christians.[127]

In 1856 a conflict involving foreigners took place in Marash, north of Ayntab. Tensions were high because of tax distribution among Christians and Muslims in the city. Christians were asked to carry a larger share of the burden of taxation than Muslims. When they complained, the tax share was equalized, however, it caused discontent among Muslims leading Muslim merchants to close their shops.[128] In this context, in September 1856, a dispute arose around a monetary transaction between a British agent and an Ottoman Muslim subject. The court legislated in favour of the Ottoman subject. The British agent, outraged,

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[126] Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1991).
[127] Farah, *Politics of Intervention*, 587.
[128] Göçek, *Rise of Bourgeoisie*, 113.

insulted the *qāḍī*. The latter then ordered for the punishment of the British agent, who hid in his house. The house was set on fire and the whole family perished.[129]

In Jerusalem, a series of conflicts regarding foreign presence also took place in 1856 and ended up in violence against Christians. The Protestant Anglican Archbishop of the Jerusalem, Mr Gobat, hung a bell upon the mission school in Nablus, and rang it, thinking that the Islahat Fermanı granted him such right. When asked by the governor if he had any official authorization to do so, he simply mentioned the rights given by the decree of 1856. Soon after, French, Prussian and British flags were raised upon private houses, to celebrate the birth of Emperor Napoleon III's son. It reinforced the perception of a political alliance of Christians and foreign powers.[130] Then, a missionary got into an altercation with a Muslim beggar, and he eventually shot him. It led to an outbreak of violence targeting the British mission. Plunder and burning of Protestant houses followed. The mission church was destroyed.[131] There was however little loss of life.[132]

The narration of these events spread over the empire and caused great worry to foreign agents. The French consul in Damascus, Max Outrey, reported that the events of Marash, Nablus and Jerusalem and described the discontent of the population towards the Islahat Fermanı as a cause of great worry among foreigners.[133] He worried that if disorders took place, they would be hard to control in the absence of a regular army.[134] The French consul advised Christians to be careful not to upset Muslims. He blamed some of the Christians for taking advantage of these new privileges to humiliate Muslims.[135] The

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[129] Ibid.

[130] Masters, *Christians and Jews,* 162; Charlotte van der Leest, "Conversion and conflict in Palestine : the missions of the Church Missionary Society and the protestant bishop Samuel Gobat," PhD diss. (Leiden University, 2008), 43.

[131] Masters*, Christians and Jews,* 162.

[132] Leila Tarazi Fawaz, *A Land of Aching Hearts: The Middle East in the Great War* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2014), 33.

[133] AE. 18/PO/Serie A, vol. 9, Outrey-Walewski, May 28th 1856.

[134] AE. 67/CPC, vol. 5/6, Outrey-Walewski, May 23rd 1856.

[135] Ibid.

circulation of rumors and news of such conflicts entrenched religious distinctions and politicized religious identities.[136]

In these conflicts, the use of the public space by Christians and foreigners was contested. Objects such as crosses and bells were used to demonstrate markers of inter-confessional power dynamics. Christian monasteries had the habit of hitting a board with a hammer to call for prayer.[137] Bells were introduced to Mount Lebanon by missionaries in the 18th century, they were imported from Europe and became the symbol of Christian identity and freedom in the mountain.[138] They were introduced in Damascus in the mid-19th century. The presence and ringing of church bells marked the sound landscape and imprinted not only a Christian but a Catholic identity on the public space of the city. Putting up bells or taking them down were part of the repertoire of inter-confessional conflict between Maronites and Druzes in the 18th century.[139] From the 1850's onward, many bells were installed on churches in *Bilād al-Šām*. The author of *Aḥwāl al-naṣārā* mentioned that in 1856 the government allowed Christians to ring bells and display crosses in the street, creating resentments among Muslims.[140] Indeed, the British consul Brant mentions that in 1858, the Catholic convent of Damascus was recently adorned with a large bell,[141] which they intended to use for the French Emperor holiday. In the same year a large bell was also placed on the Maronite church, displeasing the population.[142] Then, some inhabitants of Damascus complained that since two years Christians started to ring bells in their churches. They asked the shaykh 'Abdāllah al-Ḥalabī to remove them.[143] Yet, he was unable to do so. A letter found in the Ottoman archives from a Muslim of Damascus, although its origin is unknown, describes the fact that

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[136] Göçek, *Rise of Bourgeoisie*, 113.
[137] Heyberger, *Les Chrétiens du Proche-Orient*, 59.
[138] Ibid.
[139] Karamā, *Ḥawadit̲,* 31.
[140] *Aḥwāl al-naṣārā, 23.*
[141] F.O. 195/601, Brant-Malmesbudy, August 21st 1858.
[142] F.O. 195/601, Brant-Bulwer, September 12th 1860; F.O. 78/1520, Bulwer-Brant, August 30th 1860.
[143] A.E., 67/CPC, vol.5/6, Outrey- Lallemand, August 1t 1858.

on the day of the outbreak of the violence of 1860 in Damascus, the insurgents took a bell from one of the churches and put it upside down in the streets.[144]

The end of the Crimean war and the decree of 1856 marked the birth of a new visibility and audibility of Christianity in the public sphere. This visibility however was intertwined with displays of loyalty or at least commonality with foreign powers, and was thus read as political gestures rather than issues of religious freedom.

The potential for conflict embedded in the use of bells was clear in the eyes of Christian chroniclers. The author of *Aḥwāl al-naṣārā* claims that at the end of the Crimean war, the Ottoman government ordered Christians to ring the bells in their churches in order to create inter-confessional conflict.[145] This accusation is also found in the account of Macārīyūs Šāhīn.[146]

The ringing of bells, beyond causing resentments among Muslims, was also a tool in the competition between Christian communities. Ringing bells was a way to obtain legitimacy through marking a community's presence in the sound landscape. Each clergy attempted to win over the hearts of local Christians. The increasing number of bells installed on churches is thus both a consequence of missionary influence and of the larger inter-Christian competition for followers, especially between Catholic and Orthodox branches. Olivier Christin observes similar developments in the case of religious conflicts in Europe in the early modern period. He highlights the shift from religion as practice to religion as display, with a need to mobilize believers to increase the credibility to the religious belief.[147] In the end however, this intra-Christian competition was a source of Muslim-Christian tensions.

The display of crosses was also a symbolic marker of Christian identity in the public space. The author of *Aḥwāl al-naṣārā* provides a list of the changes introduced by the Islahat

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[144] F.O. 226/131, "Copy of a Letter from a Turkish Muslim"
[145] *Aḥwāl al-naṣārā,* 26.
[146] Šāhīn, *Ḥaṣr al-Lithām,* 225-226.
[147] Christin, "Introduction", 15.

Fermanı of 1856. He mentions the interdiction to insult Christians, their entry into government office, their granting of Muslim titles such as *effendi* and finally their ability to put crosses in the street, which he mentions was what angered Muslims the most.[148]

The Crimean war and the decree of 1856 were thus seen negatively by Muslim Damascenes as it represented the intensification of foreign intervention. Similar negative reactions to the reforms led to violence in various cities of the Ottoman Empire. In these conflicts, visible markers of Christian religious identity such as bells and crosses were politicized as they were intertwined with questions of political loyalties. They marked the change in the balance of power brought about by the Crimean war.

4.2 Humiliation

The year 1858 was marked by various events of inter-confessional violence in the Ottoman Empire. Because of the publicity given to these events through the press, they created a tense climate in *Bilād al-Šām*. First, the Ottoman government suffered a defeat at the hands of Montenegrin forces in 1858, which ended in a loss of territory for the Ottoman side. This news was received with a public uproar in the city.[149] Then, the revolts in Belgrade and Crete in which Christians were pitted against Muslims resonated negatively in the city[150] In Jeddah a commercial dispute turned into a riot against foreign interests in which twenty-two Christians were killed, including the British consul.[151] In retribution, important notables were executed and the British steamship bombarded the city. The French consul mentioned that the Damascenes saw Great Britain as the only country to support the Ottoman Empire. Its bombing of Jeddah was met with disillusion and disappointment. Great Britain was no longer seen as a foreign ally. As a consequence, the position of foreigners in the city was

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[148] *Aḥwāl al-naṣārā,* 5.
[149] F.O. 195/601, Brant-Malmesbury, August 21st 1858.
[150] Ibid; Farah, *Politics of intervention,* 525.
[151] On the events of Jeddah see Ulrike Freitag, "Symbolic Politics and Urban Violence in Late Ottoman Jeddah," in *Urban Violence in the Middle East: Changing Cityscapes in the Transition from Empire to Nation state*, ed. Ulrike Freitag, Nelida Fuccaro, Claudia Ghrawi and Nora Lafi (New York; Berghahn Books, 2015), 123.

threatened.[152] The author of *Aḥwāl al-naṣārā* also mentioned the disappointment of Muslims who used to see Great Britain as the country of freedom.[153] These events on the imperial and local scale fostered resentment towards Christians and resulted in the mistreatment of Christians in Homs[154], in Gaza[155], Jaffa and Iraq.

Humiliation was a central theme in the chronicles and is described by the observers as an immediate cause of violence. Humiliation was first a subject of inquiry on the personal level in clinical psychology. In the recent years however, it has also received attention by anthropologists, sociologists and historians as a social process linked to genocides and mass killings.[156] In social psychology, the link between humiliation and violence towards an out group is referred to as a process of splitting and projection, through which the unbearable feelings of humiliation and shame are separated from the acceptable ones and projected onto the out-group, leading to aggression towards this out-group. Ted Robert Gurr points to the hypothesis of relative deprivation: he links collective violence to feelings of being deprived of economic, social or cultural benefits that one feels entitled to. He underlines the importance of impressions and perceptions. The key here is the discrepancy between one's actual position and what he/she feels entitled to.[157]

Humiliation is the feeling of being belittled, lowered, humbled. Evelin Lindner defines the concept of humiliation as: "the enforced lowering of a person or group: a process of subjugation that damages or strips away pride, honor, and dignity. To be humiliated is to be

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[152] AE. 18/PO/Serie A, vol. 9, Outrey- Walewski, August 30th 1858, AE. 18/PO/Serie A, vol. 9, Outrey-Walewski, August 11Th 1858.
[153] *Aḥwāl al-naṣārā*, 2
[154] AE. 18/PO/Serie A, vol. 9, Outrey- Walewski, May 12th 1858.
[155] Farah, *Politics of Intervention*, 526.
[156] See Linda M. Hartling, "Humiliation: Real Pain, a Pathway to Violence," *Brazilian Journal of Sociology of Emotion* 6, no. 17 (2017): 466–479; Linda M. Hartling and Tracy Luchetta, "Humiliation: Assessing the Impact of Derision, Degradation, and Debasement," *Journal of Primary Prevention* 19, no. 4 (1999): 259–78; Evelin Lindner, *Making enemies: Humiliation and international conflict* (Westport, CN: Praeger Security International, 2006); Alexander Laban Hinton, *Annihilating difference: the anthropology of genocide* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002); Gérard Prunier, *The Rwanda crisis : history of a genocide* (New York: Columbia University Press,1995); Arjun Appadurai, *Fear of Small Numbers* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2006).
[157] Ted Robert Gurr, *Why Men Rebel* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1970), 13.

placed, against one's will (...), and often in a deeply hurtful way, in a situation that is markedly at odds with one's sense of entitlement."[158]

Sociologists such as Lindner point to the link between humiliation and violence. She explored cases of genocides of majorities against minorities in the 20th century and points to the importance of humiliation as a trigger of these events of violence. She also argues that contrary to common expectations, the strong can also be humiliated by the weak. She also argues that the mere threat of belittlement rather than the actual process can be enough to foster humiliation. According to Lindner "a fear of imagined future destitution, and of humiliating subjugation at another's hands, figured as a core justification for genocidal killing."[159]

In the case of Damascus, while the context of genocides in the 20th century differ from imperial dynamics, this analysis does shed some light on the processes at play in the violence of 1860. Discourses regarding the violence of 1860 labeled it as a revenge against the humiliation felt during the Egyptian period, the Crimean war and the decree of 1856. The author of *Kitāb al-āḥzān* discussed the events preceding the violence in which Muslim youth were arrested by the government for drawing crosses on the pavement of the Christian quarter. They were paraded in the city in chains and taken to swipe the Christian quarter. As a reaction, a crowd formed and yelled: "Where is the jealousy of Muslims? Muslims get up! This is the time to get revenge from the Christians."[160] A chronicler mentioned that the Muslim youth arrested for drawing crosses screamed at their coreligionists: " I ask your help oh John, the flag of honesty, help us ya Allah, Islam is dying. The iron is in our legs and the sweeps in our hands, and we are going to go and clean the infidel Christians".[161] The fact that they were humiliated by being forced to clean the Christian quarter was what illustrated in their eyes the

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[158] Lindner, *Making enemies*, 141.
[159] Ibid, 140.
[160] *Kitāb al-āḥzān, 22.*
[161] Father Ferdinand Toula al-Bouʾi, trans., *Nubḏa Muḫtaṣara fī ḥawādiṯ Lubnān wa'l-Šam (1840-1862)*, (Beirut: imprimerie Catholique, 1927), 116.

fact that Islam was dying. It represented the notion of the world upside-down. Violence was thus perceived as a way to reestablish order, avenge humiliation, to punish arrogance and to reestablish justice. It was also perceived as a way to preempt a situation in which Muslims might be belittled even further, thus pointing to the mechanism of fear of further humiliation.

The assignment of cleaning the streets was an important marker of social hierarchies and featured in other cases of inter-confessional conflict. A conflict took place in Mʿalaqa a year before the violence of Damascus where the same symbol of humiliation featured. Jesuits had opened their first monastery in Mʿalaqa near Zaḥle.[162] During the events of 1860, the monastery was plundered although it was near a military outpost. The inaction of the army and their probable participation in the plunder can be explained by the conflictual relationship between the army base in Mʿalaqa and the Jesuit monastery.[163] This relationship even escalated into violence in 1859. In the aftermath, soldiers were publicly humiliated, which played a role in their involvement in the violence of 1860.[164]

Mʿalaqa had an army garrison, in which 500 soldiers were kept. As with all military outposts, the cohabitation between civilians and army garrison was not without difficulties. Soldiers repeatedly annoyed the population, either by requisitioning food, disturbing the peace or requiring forced services, which was part of their prerogatives. One Sunday, the *Bimbaşı* of the garrison of Zaḥle, Haşem Agha, asked the Mʿalaqa Christian population to clean the streets of the bazaar. They even went to the Maronite and the Jesuit monastery near their garrison, disturbing the mass, asking for individuals to submit to the order.[165] Two contradictory accounts of what followed are found in the archives. What both narratives agree upon is that the soldiers were looking for men who had taken refuge either in the houses of Jesuits or in their church in which mass was taking place. When soldiers asked to be delivered

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[162] Carlos Hage Chahine and Nevine Hage Chahine, *C'etait Zahlé* (Beirut: Carlos & Nevine Hage Chaine, 2008), 42, 173. Verdeil, *La mission jésuite,* 189.

[163] Verdeil, *La mission jésuite,* 136.

[164] Ibid, 141.

[165] A.E. 166/PO-Serie D/20, vol. 5, Outrey-Lallemand, August 10th 1859.

the men, Father Billotet, the superior of the Jesuit monastery answered that the mass was in progress and that the soldiers had to wait for after the mass to get a hold on the men. An altercation followed during which Father Billotet claimed to have been mistreated by the soldiers.[166] While in his letter to the French consul he does not mention what this mistreatment was, according to letters of the French chancellor he was pulled by his beard.[167] The deacon of the Jesuits intervened to protect Father Billotet and was thus arrested by the soldiers. They accused him of attacking the soldiers first. He was eventually freed by the *kaymakam*. Michel Lanusse, the French consular chancellor of Damascus, argued that while some said that the deacon was hurt by the army, he actually had done a cupping therapy the day before, which was the reason for his wounds.[168] After this incident, Christians of Zaḥle closed their shops, which was always a sign of upcoming uprising.[169] The religious leaders however used their influence to prevent a violent encounter between the soldiers and the population.[170]

The French consul in Damascus complained that soldiers were mistreating missionaries while they had always benefited from the respect of the Muslim population beforehand. After receiving letters from the various Christian clergies of Zaḥle and Mʿalaqa, the French consul wished to obtain public redress for this affair.[171] While the governor sent his political agent Sadik effendi to Zaḥle, the French consul sent his chancellor to gain information on the affair.[172] They both came back with contradictory reports. One the one side, Sadik effendi reported that the priests had attacked the soldiers.[173] He tried to play down the encounter and argued that it was a simple conflict between civilians and soldiers. The

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[166] A.E. 166/PO-Serie D/20, vol. 5, Outrey-Lallemand, Annex : Letter of the superiors of the Jesuits in Zahle to Outrey, August 10th 1859.
[167] A.E. 166/PO-Serie D/20, vol. 5, Outrey-Lallemand, August 10th 1859.
[168] Ibid, August 14th 1859.
[169] A.E. 166/PO-Serie D/20, vol. 5 Outrey-Lallemand, August 10th 1859,
[170] Ibid.
[171] Ibid.
[172] A.E. 166/PO-Serie D/20, vol. 5, Outrey-Thouvenel, August 23rd 1859.
[173] A.E. 166/PO-Serie D/20, vol. 5, Outrey-Thouvenel, September 7th 1859.

chancellor of the French consul, on the other hand, reported that the soldiers mistreated a priest without any prior provocation. The French consul did not agree that this was just an simple conflict between civilians and soldiers and asked his ambassador how to obtain redress.[174] With the involvement of the French ambassador, this affair became a diplomatic issue. He obtained a *ferman* from the Grand Vizier ordering retributions towards the Jesuits. The governor Ahmed Paşa however failed to punish the guilty parties.[175] When the French consul asked for satisfaction in the affair of Father Billotet, showing the Grand Vizier's *ferman*, Ahmad Pasha answered that this was a military affair and thus he awaited for the instructions of the Minister of War.[176] The conflict in Istanbul between the military and the bureaucrats was represented in the provinces by the competition between the civil governor and the *muşir*, or army leader. In many instances the *muşir* tried to create disorders in order to show the weakness of the civil governor and to step in to save the day, thereby increasing his power.[177] This conflict explains many policies adopted by both functionaries. Ahmed Paşa was in charge of the Army of Arabistan, including the garrison of Mʿalaqa. The soldiers were thus under his authority. Military discipline was his prerogative, and he must have resented the intervention of foreign consuls in his treatment of soldiers.

The French consul was surprised by the reaction of Ahmed Paşa and his unwillingness to give redress in this affair, although he had a *ferman* to this purpose.[178] He observed that the military pride of Ahmad Pasha must have been hurt by this affair, explaining his behavior. The French consul also remarked that the lack of resources of the provincial administration had prevented the payment of soldiers who had 24 months of arrears.[179] It was thus difficult to punish them without giving them more reasons to form a mutiny.

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[174] Ibid.

[175] A.E. 166/PO-Serie D/20, vol. 5, Outrey-Lallemand, August 10th 1859; Ibid, Lanusse-Outrey August 14th 1859.

[176] A.E. 166/PO-Serie D/20, vol. 5, Outrey-Ahmad Pasha, November 11th 1859.

[177] See the attempts of the interim commandant general Izzet Pasha to get the wali Warmick Paşa recalled in F.O. 195/458, Wood- de Redcliffe, January 16th 1856.

[178] A.E. 166/PO-Serie D/20, vol. 5, Outrey-Thouvenel, November 16th 1859.

[179] AE. 18/PO/Serie A, vol. 10, Outrey-Thouvenel, November 16th 1859.

While the French consul initially had a good relationship with Ahmed Paşa,[180] this affair of Mʿalaqa marked a turn in their relationship. From September 1859, the French consul saw Ahmed Paşa increasingly negatively.[181] The consul insisted that Haşem Agha the *Bimbaşı* had to be judged in Istanbul for this affair.[182] In the end, he managed to obtain the removal of *mutasalīm*[183] or tax collector of Mʿalaqa, Şakir Bey. The soldiers were publicly humiliated by being hit in public and payed the equivalent of 5000 francs of indemnities to the victims.[184] Then, the commander of the troops was sent to Istanbul and Haşem Agha was imprisoned in Damascus for a month.[185] The French consul said that Ahmed Paşa had finally yielded because he saw the influence that the French had in Istanbul.[186] This affair provoked the indignation of many in Lebanon.[187] In Ḥāsbayā, Christians were worried about attacks from Druze following this affair.[188] Father Billotet himself complained about the disproportionate reaction of the French consul, who in his eyes had intervened solely to increase French influence.[189]

This public humiliation of the army to satisfy the French consulate marked the spirits of the soldiers as well. In 1860, the soldiers in the barracks of Mʿalaqa did not intervene to save the Zahliots from the attack of the Ḥarfūš and Druze in 1860. This inaction can be seen as a revenge on the part of the soldiers. In the same manner, Ahmed Paşa did not take the necessary steps to protect Zaḥle. Father Billotet was killed in the violence of 1860, which might have a been a revenge for his role in 1859.[190]

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[180] A.E. 166/PO-Serie D/20, vol. 5, Outrey-Lallemand, July 20th 1859; AE. 18/PO- Serie A, vol. 10, Outrey-Lallemand, February 23rd 1859 and March 23rd 1859.
[181] A.E. 166/PO-Serie D/20, vol. 5, Outrey-Thouvenel, September 7th 1859.
[182] AE. 18/PO- Serie A, vol. 10, Outrey-Thouvenel, November 23rd 1859.
[183] Tax collector, district governor
[184] Chahine, *C'etait Zahlé*, 173.
[185] F.O. 195/601, Brant-Bulwer, December 20th 1859.
[186] A.E. 166/PO-Serie D/20, vol. 5, Outrey-Thouvenel, November 30th 1859.
[187] Chahine, *C'etait Zahlé,* 173.
[188] A.E. 166/PO-Serie D/20, vol. 5, Outrey-Thouvenel, August 23rd 1859.
[189] Verdeil, *La mission jésuite*, 136.
[190] Ibid, 141.

The punishment used against the Muslim youth in Damascus just before the violence of 1860 resonates with the events of Mʿalaqa. In Mʿalaqa, the Ottoman army had requisitioned Christians to sweep the streets, which was seen as a humiliating action and led to a physical fight with the Jesuits. In 1860, it is not a coincidence that the same punishment was used towards the Muslim youth. The governor had used exemplary punishment before, but it targeted Druze or Alawis, or troublesome neighborhoods outside the city. Exemplary punishment often took the form of communal punishment through an extra taxation or imprisonment of neighborhood leaders. The punishment to sweep the streets of the Christian quarter in the summer of 1860 was unusual and quite symbolic. This punishment was so unacceptable in the eyes of the Muslim merchants probably because it referred to the events of Mʿalaqa. It highlighted the fact that because of their foreign protection, Christians had immunity vis à vis the Ottoman government, they could hit a soldier and obtain excuses from the government. For Muslims, this was quite the contrary. This double standard encouraged resentments towards Christians. The feeling of humiliation was linked to the concern regarding the declining social status, the upsetting of traditional hierarchies understood to represent justice. Justice meant the superiority of Islam in the public sphere, the special status of Muslims in a Muslim state. The loss of this special status was seen as an injustice but also a humiliation.

Various accounts point to the fact that the initial idea for the punishment came from a group of Greek Catholics. These Greek Catholics had some influence over the Ottoman government and its guards, and they managed to obtain this punishment. The chronicles identify these Christians as Greek Catholics, and often point to Ḥannā Frayǧ, the dragoman of the Russian consulate Ḫalīl Šaḥāda, Āntūn Šāmī and Dīmītrī Šalhūb.[191] They were the most

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[191] Al-Usṭwānī, *Mashāhid,* 173.

prominent members of the Greek Caholic elite of the city.[192] Ḫalīl Šaḥāda he was one of the first killed during the violence, the Russian consul was particularly hated by the Damascene population.[193] We have encountered Ḥannā Frayǧ before as an important actor of the internal struggles of the Greek Catholic community, as he represented the new elite involved in commerce and in the administration upon which the patriarch relied. All the other Christians mentioned belonged to this faction.

These Greek Catholics were simultaneously employed by the local government and under foreign protection. They were scribes, landowners, money lenders, and grain merchants. In the spam of twenty years they managed to centralize such resources that they were became the Christian elite of the city. Frayǧ and the likes of him had capitalized upon the opportunities given by the *Tanzimat* and foreign intervention to assert their political and economic power in the city. As such, in the eyes of the population, they represented the rise of a new Christian elite who had enough power to influence the governors in their favor. They also represented the increasing foreign intervention and the various privileges enjoyed by protégés. They attracted the resentment of the general population, who saw their economic success as a sign of the privileges accorded to Christians, of foreign intervention and of their own loss of status.[194]

The Latin priest Sac Augusto Autirs wrote an account of the events of 1860 to the apostolic envoy Valerga blaming Ḥannā Frayǧ for the whole affair. He explained that Frayǧ paid off the prison guard to make the youth clean the street of the Christian quarter. For this reason, Muslims were angered and asked for Frayǧ to be delivered to them, but they could not

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[192] Grégoire Balivet, *Damas à la fin de l'Empire Ottoman (vers 1875) : d'après la description du "Kitâb al-Rawda al-ghannâ' fî Dimashq al-fayhâ'" de Nuʿmân Efendi Qasâtlî (1854-1920)* (Istanbul : Les Éditions Isis, 2014), 12, 13.

[193] Josias Leslie Porter, *Five Years in Damascus : With Travels and Researches in Palmyra, Lebanon, the Giant Cities of Bashan, and the Hauran*. 2nd ed (London: J. Murray, 1870), 351; BOA A.MKT.UM, 535/84, February 28th 1862; For more information on the Russian dragoman see BOA, HR.MKT.228, February 19th 1858. Farah, *The Politics of Intervention,* 588.

[194] F.O., 195/601, Brant-Bulwer, August 25th 1860.

reach him, thus the attack against the Christian quarter ensued.[195] A similar pattern to the events of 1850 in Aleppo is observable, the public anger targets one individual who is not found and thus the violence turns against a more general target, or his whole community.[196]

In conclusion, the Crimean war inaugurated a new period in the history of the Ottoman Empire. It led to a shift in the power relations in Istanbul, bringing to power individuals who differed from their predecessors in their approach to the role of the *šarīʿa* and the ulema in the decision-making process. They also transformed state-society relations through the Islahat Fermanı in 1856. The comprehensibility of these reforms by the population was compromised by the lack of pedagogical effort to explain the transition of state-society relations. In addition to changing the role of non-Muslims in the empire, the decree came to represent the abolition of privileges of a variety of intermediaries and status groups. The reforms were resented as a loss of status, a humiliation for many Muslims while it was seen as a privilege awarded to Christians. The Crimean war displayed the military power of European powers and the weakness of the Ottoman State, and marked the increasing foreign influence in the empire. It further entrenched this feeling of humiliation and loss. These dynamics played a large role in the outbreak of violence. In Damascus, the change in the balance of power between religious communities was represented by the economic and political success of a few Greek Catholics, who were targeted during the violence of 1860.

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[195] *S.C.P.F, (S.C) Greci Melchiti* ,vol. 25, p. 766, Sac Augusto Aurtis to Valerga, July 18th 1860.

[196] Masters, *Christians and Jews*, 5, 6; On the events of Aleppo see Feras Krimsti "The 1850 Uprising in Aleppo. Reconsidering the Explanatory Power of Sectarian Argumentations," in *Urban Violence in the Middle East. Changing Cityscapes in the Transition from Empire to Nation state,* ed. Ulrike Freitag and Nelida Fuccaro (New York / Oxford: Berghahn, 2015) and Ibid, *Die Unruhen von 1850 in Aleppo: Gewalt im urbanen Raum* (Berlin: Klaus Schwarz, 2014).

CHAPTER 6: THE TRANSFORMATION OF THE ḎIMMĀ STATUS AND STATE-SOCIETY RELATIONS

The reforms which followed the Crimean war upset social hierarchies and transformed the place of non-Muslims in the Ottoman Empire. Central to this transformation is the legal status of the *ḏimma*, which was gradually abolished from the 1856 decree onwards. This status was central to the governmentality of the Ottoman and Islamic empires in general. Yet, the *ḏimma* was a social contract which underlined not only non-Muslims interactions with the state but also with their Muslims neighbors. The abolition of this status thus entailed a complete re-imagination of society and the relation between religious groups. It also led to an important legislation effort on the part of *fuqahāʾ*, or jurists, to adapt to this new context. The transformation of the *ḏimma* also had dire consequences for the legitimacy of the state and is referred to in the accounts of the violence of 1860.[1] This chapter will displace the debate on the *ḏimma* as a tool of either oppression or accommodation by rather looking at it as a dynamic status. It will point to its transformation rather than evaluate its performance in managing a plural society. The various interpretations of the *ḏimma* will be explored as well as their interaction with the *Tanzimat* reforms.

This chapter will delve into the status of the *ḏimma* and the consequences of its transformation for inter-confessional relations. First, we will explore the nature of the *ḏimma* and its central place in the legitimacy of the state. Then, we will look at various jurists' discussions regarding the abolition of the conditions of the *ḏimma*. Subsequently, we will analyse the influence of the *ṭarīqā* Naqšbandīya on the interpretations of these reforms in

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[1] *Aḥwāl al-naṣārā*, 5; *Kitāb al-āḥzān*, 24.

Damascus. Finally, we will look at the role of the *ṭarīqā* in challenging the legitimacy of Sultan Abülmecid.

1. The *Ḏimma* as a Dynamic Status

The political role and social position of non-Muslims in the Ottoman empire was quite variable, depending on the region, the time period, patron-client relationships and the composition of the political and economic elite. A common conceptual framework which created a certain continuity across space and time is the notion of the *ḏimma,* a juridical status that regulated the belonging of non-Muslims in a Muslim polity. It had implications for the relationship between the Ottoman government and its non-Muslim subjects but also for inter-confessional relations between Muslims and non-Muslims. It was often mentioned in the accounts of inter-confessional relations as a factor either of coexistence or persecutions. Yet, the nature of the *ḏimma* is rarely discussed and often presented as unchangeable. Chronicles, administrative and consular archives consulted for this research however present a more dynamic picture of the *ḏimma,* pointing to the evolution in this status, the various degrees of its applications and the diversity of interpretations regarding its purpose. Non-Muslims also had various visions of the *ḏimma*, from restrictive to protective. They either used it as a tool of negotiation or rejected the restrictions associated with this status.

The *ğizya,* or special tax applied to non-Muslims, was abolished by the Islahat Fermanı of 1856. It was the main condition of the *ḏimma.* This abolition created what James Fearon and David Latin, in their work on ethnic conflict, define as a 'commitment problem'. This problem arises whenever the balance of ethnic power shifts and the system of checks and balance is challenged. The existing social contract is thus no longer effective to regulate inter-confessional relations, leading to violence.[2]

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[2] James Fearon and David Latin, "Violence and the Social Construction of Ethnic Identity," *International Organization* 54, vol. 4 (Autumn 2000): 845-877; See also David A. Lake and Donald S. Rothchild, *The International Spread of Ethnic Conflict : Fear, Diffusion, and Escalation* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1998), 51.

Interestingly, the abolition of the *ǧizya* seldom appeared among the political demands of non-Muslims in Damascus. Rather the 1831-1854 period was underlined by disputes regarding the distribution of taxes among the different societal groups.[3] Before the decree of 1856, Christians in Damascus did not try to avoid the *ǧizya*, but rather used their payment of this tax as a proof of their loyalty and as a basis to demand justice and protection. For example, in an outline of demands presented to the Austrian diplomats in 1840 regarding the organization of Mount Lebanon, the representative of the Maronite church demanded the abolition of all taxes except the *miri* and the *ǧizya* which he described as part of custom.[4] Taxes established by custom were seen as fairer than new ones, perceived as innovations.

Another example is the Greek Catholic patriarch Maksīmūs Maẓlūm's use of the logic of the *ḏimma* to obtain redress. In 1847, he complained to the central government about the decision of the *maǧlīs* of Aleppo to forbid Christians to buy property from Muslims. He argued that according to *šarīʿa*, Christians belong to the *āhl i-ḏimma*, and that according to this contract, they are to be treated as equal to Muslims once they paid the *ǧizya*. According to him, this contract was reinforced by the *Tanzimat* reforms. He then stated that since the Islamic conquest no such law of forbidding purchases had been passed and that religious groups always purchased from each other.[5] According to Maẓlūm, the reforms just came to remind the policy-makers of the social contract bounding Muslims to non-Muslims. His main reference in making this complaint was the *šarīʿa*, not the reforms. Maẓlūm also cited the Pact of ʿUmar in various occasions as a basis to prevent the oppression of Greek Orthodox towards Greek Catholics.[6] The use of the *ǧizya* to demand equality contrasted with the discussions that took place after the Islahat Fermanı of 1856. In this later period, non-Muslims no longer pointed to their payment of the *ǧizya* as a ground to demand justice, but rather demanded

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[3] On this subject see Chapter 7.
[4] Makdisi, *Culture of Sectarianism*, 62.
[5] BOA, A.DVN.21.12, September 1st 1847.
[6] Maẓlūm, *Nubḏa tārīḫīya,* 323.

equal treatment with Muslims or other *milel*[7] just by virtue of being subjects.[8] This epistemologic shift demonstrates the adaptation of non-Muslim's strategies to the state discourse.

The *ḏimma* contract was embedded in the highly hierarchical Ottoman system of rule and perception of the world. According to Pierre Bourdieu, law is a representation of reality but also a tool of reproduction of social hierarchies. It is thus a dynamic discourse and a tool of institutionalization of values.[9] The *ḏimma* was underlined by Islamic conceptions of the common good (*maṣlaḥa*), justice (*ʿadl*), morality (*taqwā*) and the relationship between humans and God.[10]

2. Abolition of the *Ḏimma*?

How did jurists react to these transformations of the hierarchies and the social order? Did they try to legitimize the reforms through the use of *iğtihād*,[11] or did they instead voice their criticism against these changes? What arguments were put forward? The *ḏimma* status, as a central aspect of the state-society relations, was intrinsically linked to notions of justice, social order, and state legitimacy. Societal developments affected how jurists perceived the *ḏimma* and the legal decisions they took accordingly. This status is often presented as a side issue of Islamic polities. However, the *ḏimma* is at the heart of the state-society relationship as it is a basis of state legitimacy.[12] The question whether the *ḏimma* had been abolished or not by the reforms of the *Tanzimat* was present in accounts of the violence of 1860. According to some, the reforms abolished the *ḏimma*, thus non-Muslims lost their *ʿiṣma* and were no longer to be protected by the state.[13] This argument was used to justify violence or at least to prevent its punishment. A pamphlet distributed before the violence of 1860 promoted the idea that

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[7] Plural of *millet*.
[8] Mishāqah, *Murder, Mayhem*, 226.
[9] See Pierre Bourdieu, "La force du droit. Éléments pour une sociologie du champ juridique," *Actes de la recherche en sciences sociales* 64 (September 1986): 13.
[10] Emon, *Religious Pluralism*, 140, note 131.
[11] Legal innovation
[12] Ibid, 18.
[13] *Aḥwāl al-naṣārā*, 5; *Kitāb al-āḥzān*, 24.

Christians had overstepped their limits, had broken the *ḏimma* contract. This pamphlet argued that, as a consequence, Christians were no longer to be protected and could be targets of violence.[14] The author of *Kitāb al-āḥzān* mentioned that Bedouins who came to attack Christians said that they could be attacked because they did not pay the *ǧizya*.[15] The author of *Aḥwāl al-Naṣārā* mentioned that some argued that as Christians didn't pay the *ǧizya* and could carry weapons, they were no longer to be protected.[16]

The call to violence pointed to the interpretation that the *ḏimma* contract could be broken by the breaching of its conditions by individuals. Inter-confessional tensions were high in this period when a non-Muslim broke one of the conditions of the *ḏimma,* for example when a Christian killed a Muslim or committed unlawful sexual intercourse with a Muslim, or insulted Islam. In some cases it led to uprisings and popular demands for the execution of the guilty party.[17]

The idea that breaching the conditions of the *ḏimma* abolished the status altogether was not a new conception. It is found in *fiqh* books of ʿAlāʾ al-dīn al-Haṣkafī and Ḫayr al-dīn al-Ramlī (17th century).[18] Yet, it was not a notion supported by the Ḥanafī *fiqh* manuals of the 19th century, the official *fiqh* school of the Ottoman Empire. The aforementioned pamphlet distributed in 1860 also pointed to legal opinions originating from abroad, in this case Central Asia and India, which gave Muslims the right to attack non-Muslims.[19] The chronicler Mīḫāʾīl Mišāqa mentioned that the emir 'Abd al-Qādir al-Ǧazāʾirī, an influential Algerian ʿalim resident in Damascus, attempted to stop the outburst of violence by discussing with the members. He argued that according to the Qurʾan the killing of Christians was not allowed,

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[14] See this pamphlet in *Les Massacres du Mont Liban 1860 : souvenirs de Syrie par un témoin oculaire* (Paris: Asmar, 2007), 114, 115.
[15] *Kitāb al-āḥzān,* 24.
[16] Aḥwāl al-naṣārā, 5.
[17] A.E, 18/PO/A, vol. 9, Outrey-Walewski, August 11th 1858.
[18] ʿAlā'-ad-Dīn al-Haṣkafī, *al-Durar al-muḥtār fī šarḥ Tanwīr al-abṣār*, edited by ʿAbd al Monʿam Ḫalīl Ibrāhīm (Beirut: Dar al Kitāb al-ʿilmīyā, 2002), 343; Ḫayr al-dīn al-Ramlī, *Al-Fatāwā al-Ḫayrīyā li-nafʿa al-barīyā ʿalā maḏhab al-imām al-ʿaẓīm abī Ḥanīfā al-Nuʿmān* (Maṭbaʿā al Kubrā al Mīrīyā, 1882), 101.
[19] *Les Massacres du Mont Liban,* 114.

and that those who rose against them were to be considered as rebels to the state and thus the government had a responsibility to kill them, even if they were Muslims. According to Mishāqa, the *Ḥanafī* mufti Ṭahir effendi helped him to prove this argument to the governor on religious grounds.[20] There were thus different opinions regarding the question of the abolition of the *ḏimma*. It corresponded to a difference of opinion between the *Ḥanafī* and *Šāfiʿī fiqh*. In Damascus, the elite ulema was usually *Ḥanafī* and the neighborhood shaykhs or *ṭarīqa* leaders tended to follow *Šāfiʿī fiqh*, explaining the various interpretations of the *ḏimma*.

These two opinions were developed based on the political context in which *fiqh* schools were formed. The main scholars in the Iraqi *fiqh* school of the 8th century argued that the *ḏimma* was *bil-ādamiya* (universal): it was a contract between God and all humans. Later on, the Transoxian school which developed in the 11th and 12th century in Central Asia rather argued that humans benefited from the *ḏimma* (protection) of God *bil imān aw al-āmān*, either by being Muslim or by making a contract with Muslims who had this *ḏimma*. The *ḏimma bil-ādamiya* could not be broken, while the *ḏimma bil imān aw al-āmān* could be broken if the intermediary contract with Muslims was broken.[21]

These two opinions bore important consequences for the place of non-Muslims in Muslims societies. *Fuqahāʾ* which succeeded the Transoxian school both in the *Šāfiʿī* and Ḥanafī schools, including Ibn al-Humām[22] (15th century), al-Ramlī,[23] and al-Ḥaṣkafī (17th century) built on the second opinion of the *ḏimma bil imān aw al-āmān*. However, in the 19th century, some *Ḥanafī fuqahāʾ* perceived the need to return to the opinions presented by the Iraqi school, and saw the notion of *ḏimma bil ādamiya* as a solution to the issues facing the

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[20] Mishāqa, *Mašhad*, 174. The author of *Kitāb al-āḥzān*, however mentioned that he then made a fatwa legitimizing the killing of Christians because they did not pay taxes. This account however is not mentioned in other sources, which tend rather to put the blame on the *Šāfiʿī* mufti. It could be argued that he confused the two individuals; Elias N. Saad, "The Damascus Crisis of 1860 in Light of Kitab Al Ahzan, an Unpublished Eye-Witness Account," (Beirut: American Univeristy of Beirut, 2007), 420.
[21] Recep Senturk, "Minority Rights in Islam: From Dhimmi to Citizen," in *Islam and Human Rights: Advancing a U.S. - Muslim Dialogue*, eds. S, Hunter and H Malik (Washington D.C.: Center for Strategic and International Studies, 2005), 73, 75.
[22] Kamāl al Dīn ibn al-Humām, *Fatḥ al Qāḏīr*, 52.
[23] Ḫayr al-dīn al-Ramlī, *Al-Fatāwā,* 101.

Ottoman Empire.[24] Among *Šāfiʿīs* however the Transoxian approach continued to dominate. In the 19th century, the question of the *ḏimma* also increased in importance in the works of scholars, visible in the number of pages dedicated to this issue, showing a growing concern about this status.[25]

The question of the possible abolition of the *ḏimma was* a point of disagreement among scholars. Al-Ramlī and al-Haṣkafī in the 17th century argued that if non-Muslims broke a condition of the *ḏimma* contract, the protection was to be abolished.[26] For the 19th century, we will focus on the opinions of two scholars. First, the *āmīn al-fatwā* of Damascus, Muḥammad Āmīn ibn ʿĀbidīn wrote a *fiqh* manual called *Radd al-Muḥtār ʿala al-Dur al-Muḫtār*. He was one of the assistants of the mufti Ḥussayn al-Murādī.[27] The second work under consideration is *al-Lubāb fī Sharḥ al-Kitāb* written by ʿAbd al-Ġānī al-Ġunaymī al-Maydānī in the 1850's and published it in 1858.[28] Al-Maydānī did not hold any official post but was one of the Maydān's most influential man. He was of a middle status and was close to ʿAbd al-Qādir al-Ǧazāʾirī and his circle of study.[29] He protected the Christians of the neighborhood in 1860.[30]

Ibn ʿĀbidīn and Al-Maydānī considered not only the opinions of their predecessors, but also the opinions of the Ottoman *Šayḫ al-Islām* and the context of the empire. They sought to find a way to preserve the *ḏimma* contract even in the new imperial context and in the face of the gradual abolition of all its conditions. They argued that the *ḏimma* continued even if its

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[24] ʿAbd al-Ġanī al-Ġunaymī al-Maydānī, *al-Lubāb fī šarḥḥ al-Kitāb, 4th edition* (Beirut: al-Maktabā al-ʿIlmīyā, 1980), vol. 4, 147.

[25] For example, while the aforementioned ulema had spent a few paragraphs on the issue, Muḥammad Āmīn ibn ʿĀbidīn, the main scholar of the *Ḥanafī maḏhab* in 19th century Damascus, wrote forty pages on this subject; Muḥammad Āmin ibn ʿĀbidīn, *Radd al-muḥtār ʿala al-dar al-muḥtār šarāḥ tanwīr al-ābṣār* (Riyadh: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmīyya, 2003),vol. 6, 312-353.

[26] Alāʾ-ad-Dīn al-Haṣkafī, *al-Durar*, 343; Ḫayr al-dīn al-Ramlī, *Al-Fatāwā*, 101.

[27] He died during the Egyptian rule of Syria in 1836. His work is a gloss on the *Ḥanafī fiqh* manual of the scholar ʿAlāʾ al-dīn al-Haṣkafī (d. 1677) *Al-Durar al-muḥtār fī šarḥ tanwīr al-ābṣār*.

[28] It was a commentary on the *Muḫtaṣar* of the scholar al-Qudūrī.

[29] Weismann, *Taste of modernity,* 208.

[30] Commins, *Islamic Reform,* 41.

conditions were not respected.[31] They discussed the role of the *ğizya*, which had previously been considered as the main condition of the *ḏimma*. Ibn ʿĀbidīn argued that the *ğizya* had been agreed upon beforehand and thus had caused the contract. This initial engagement continued even if the *ğizya* was no longer paid. According to the jurist, the only thing that could break the *ḏimma* was if non-Muslims declared war on Muslims or left the Islamic lands.[32] Thus, according to Ibn ʿĀbidīn, Christians and Jews' lives and properties were to be protected by the government even in the absence of the *ğizya*. This opinion was quite a break with the approach to the *ḏimma* by his *Ḥanafī* predecessors in the 17th and 18th century.

Al-Maydānī argued that rather than breaking the *ḏimma*, the transgressions of its conditions should be punished as it would be for a Muslims. For example, if a non-Muslim committed unlawful sexual intercourse with a Muslim, or if a non-Muslim killed a Muslim, he should receive the same punishment than a Muslim who engaged in the same crimes.[33] These actions, rather than being political issues having consequences for the whole community, should be treated as individual criminal issues. Al-Maydānī, who wrote during the *Tanzimat*, attempted to find solutions to the new conditions of the empire.

In the works of Ibn ʿĀbidīn and al-Maydānī a new notion is emphasized, that of majority/minority. This notion was not present in the work of their predecessors. For example, the Central Asian school had argued that non-Muslims could only live in villages.[34] Ibn ʿĀbidīn disagreed and rather emphasized that they could live in cities as long as it did not reduce the number of Muslims who have to remain a majority.[35] He was worried by the fact that Christians were buying more and more houses around mosques, thus turning the forsaken mosques into ruins.[36] Other legal opinions provided by Ibn ʿĀbidīn point to this concern for

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[31] al-Maydānī, *al-Lubāb*, vol. 4, 147; Ibn ʿĀbidīn, *Radd al-muḥtār,* vol. 6, 342.
[32] Ibn ʿĀbidīn, *Radd al-muḥtār,*vol. 6, 342.
[33] al-Maydānī, *al-Lubāb, vol.* 4, 147, 148.
[34] Ibn ʿĀbidīn, *Radd al-muḥtār,* vol. 6, 339.
[35] Ibid.
[36] Ibid.

the balance of power between communities, reflecting the changing dynamics of the city of Damascus. For example, he criticized the mufti of Damascus for allowing Christians to buy a synagogue from the Jewish community. Jews had complained to him that Christians bought it through corruption, thanks to their relationship with Ibrāhīm ʿAlī and that their aim was to purchase the whole neighborhood. Ibn ʿĀbidīn argued that this construction of a church instead of the synagogue was contrary to the *ḏimma*, and decries the fact that Greek Catholics had already bought all the houses around it.[37]

The context of the Egyptian rule under which Ibn ʿĀbidīn was writing clearly underlies many of his concerns. He insisted that Christians should not be given important positions and treated with too much reverence,[38] while the Greek Catholic Ḥannā Baḥrī was seen by the population as the real governor, receiving all the state honors and orienting policy.[39] Then, the fear of a collusion between Christians and foreign powers was emphasized in his work. He pointed to the fact that non-Muslims had allied against Muslims in *Bilād al-Šām*, referring to the role of Christians in the Egyptian rule.[40] He also mentioned that Christians had already betrayed Muslims during the Mongol conquest.[41] In conclusion, these *fuqahāʾ* adapted their legal reasoning to the problems of the time and reinterpreted notions of the *ḏimma* in a new context. They were trying to find a way to maintain the *ḏimma* under these new circumstances but at the same time resented the increasing power of Christians and foreign powers in the Empire.[42]

While the elite and *Ḥanafī* ulema argued that non-Muslims still had to be protected by the *ḏimma*,[43] the public opinion tended to rely on the interpretation that protection could be

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[37] Ibid, 330.
[38] Ibn ʿĀbidīn, *Radd al-muḥtār,* vol. 336.
[39] *Muḏakkirāt tārīḫiyya*, 59.
[40] Ibn ʿĀbidīn, *Radd al-muḥtār,* vol. 336.
[41] Ibid, vol. 6, 329.
[42] See similar attempts at legitimizing the reforms through *fiqh*, Senturk, "Intellectual Dependency," 284; Samy Ayoub, *Law, empire, and the sultan : Ottoman imperial authority and late Hanafi jurisprudence (*New York, NY : Oxford University Press, 2019), 130.
[43] Mishāqa, *Mašhad,* 174.

lifted by breaking a condition of the contract. The *Šāfiʿī* mufti, ʿUmar al-Ġazzī, is suspected of providing opinions that went in this direction and was sent in exile after the violence of 1860.[44] The French consul argued that while he could not prove his direct implication in the violence, his ideas regarding non-Muslims were to blame.[45] This accusation is corroborated by the British consul James Brant, who mentions that ʿUmar al-Ġazzī is thought to have encouraged violence towards Christians.[46]

According to *Šāfiʿī fiqh* as thought by contemporary jurists, one could argue that if non-Muslims lost the *ḏimma* through the non-payment of the *ğizya*, they would loose their *ʿiṣma*, their juridical personality. In this case, there could be no punishment for the attacks against non-Muslims' lives and possessions, for a Muslim could not be punished for the murder of theft of someone who did not hold a juridical personality.[47] In this case, they were not *ḏimmī*, not even *mustaʾmīn*, their presence on the Ottoman soil was not legitimate. Thus, according to this line of thought, violence could not be encouraged but it would not be punished. It could thus encourage violent action.

This argument was quite popular in Damascus and is found in the chronicles and accounts of the violence. For example, Mīḫāʾīl Mišāqa in his chronicle regretted that Christians rebelled against the *ğizya* or *bedel-i askeri* because it was a religious principle for Muslims and that the non-payment would put an end to pact of the *ḏimma* and legally oblige Muslims to declare war on Christians.[48]

How can we explain this disconnect between developments in *Ḥanafī fiqh* and popular conceptions of the *ḏimma?* One might wonder why *Šāfiʿī* conceptions dominated in the public discourses while the *Ḥanafī fiqh* school was dominant in the empire. Why did the *Ḥanafī* ulema fail to impose the *fiqh* transformations regarding the *ḏimma*?

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[44] al-Ustwānī, *Masāhid*, 184; Schilcher, *Families in Politics,* 173.
[45] A.E. 18/PO/A, vol. 10 , Outrey-Lavallete, August 22nd 1860.
[46] F.O. 195/601, Brant-Bulwer, September 25th 1860.
[47] Emon, *Religious Pluralism*, 237-238.
[48] Mishāqah, *Murder, Mayhem*, 226.

On the one hand, this failure was rooted in the loss of power of elite ulema. Although they were co-opted in the *maǧlis* or the other newly created religious institutions, they could no longer assume the role of intermediaries to explain the socio-political transformations through the religious prism. Non-official ulema increasingly criticized them as corrupted because of their co-optation by the government and financial malpractice.[49] Instead of the *Ḥanafī* mufti, neighborhood shaykhs and *ṭarīqa* leaders shaped the comprehension of the socio-political changes in the empire. As they were the ones who suffered the most from the reforms of the waqf and of the ulema, they saw the reforms through a less favorable light than the official ulema who gained in power through their institutionalization and participation in the *maǧlis*.

3. The Naqšbandīya's influence on Damascenes' Understandings of the Reforms

The lack of influence of the *Ḥanafī* elite ulema was also a consequence of the important role of the *ṭarīqa* Naqšbandīya in the city, which favored the *Šāfiʿī fiqh* interpretation of the *ḏimma*. The Naqšbandīya contributed to upsetting the power dynamics of the city of Damascus. Its criticism of the elite ulema contributed to delegitimizing the latter in the eyes of the population, favoring instead ulema of secondary mosques and madrasa.[50] In addition, the *ṭarīqa* was a tool of social mobility for the newcomers and inhabitants of peripheral neighborhoods who were struggling to gain access to the resources and positions of the elite of the city.

Members of the *ṭarīqa* had a voice in shaping how the reforms were understood by the local population. As Olivier Bouquet argues, the dichotomy between reformers and conservatives does not hold when looking at individual political trajectories. Supporters of

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[49] Weismann, *Taste of Modernity,* 201; The same process was at play in Istanbul, the elite ulema was delegitimized because of its support for the reforms, see M. Alper. Yalçinkaya, *Learned Patriots: Debating Science,* state*, and Society in the Nineteenth Century Ottoman Empire* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2015), 34; Khoury, *Urban notables*, 16.
[50] Weismann, *Taste of Modernity,* 201.

reforms can easily turn against them when new currents emerge. Bouquet rather proposes to shift from the analysis of modernizers and conservatives to the exploration of sociogenesis, the role individuals endorse vis-a-vis their ascribed and assigned statuses and their successive and overlapping loyalties to ideologies and relationships to modernity.[51]

The city of Damascus was composed of a variety of status groups, which were often geographically mapped. Existing works have emphasized a binary factionalism in the city.[52] There were indeed two largely defined groups who often competed for political power in the city. On the one hand, there was a faction well-embedded into the Ottoman state structure, the center city notables gravitating around the ʿAẓm family, former governors of the city. They were traditionally allied with the Kurdish *āġāwāt* of Ṣālḥīya.[53] This faction was also closely linked to the Murādī *Ḥanafī* mufti position, which was monopolized in the family since the 18th century. They often had official positions and used their networks in Istanbul to obtain appointments.[54] In one word, the ʿAẓm-Murādī faction was the elite of the city, residing in the most prestigious neighborhood, the Qanawāt, and enjoying numerous privileges. Its members often were large property owners in the areas around Damascus. Many of them sat on the *maǧlis.*[55]

On the other hand, there was the faction of 'locals', *baladī,* who lived in the peripheral quarter of the Maydān, or in 'Amara, in merchants neighborhoods. They came from families which more recently arrived in the city. Many of them were linked to the *āġāwāt* of the Maydān neighborhood, former Janissaries who immersed themselves in civil life.[56] As inhabitants of the Maydān, they were often related to the grain trade or to sheep commerce.

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[51] Bouquet, "Is it time?", 61.
[52] For example in Schilcher, *Families in Politics.*
[53] See map in Annex 1.
[54] Khoury, *Urban Notables,* 14.
[55] Schilcher, *Families in Politics,* 16.
[56] Brigite Marino, *Le faubourg du Mīdān à Damas à l'époque ottomane : Espace urbain, société et habitat (1742-1830)*, P I F D (Damascus: Institut français de Damas, 1997), 23; Schilcher, *Families in Politics*, 16; Johann Büssow, "Street politics in Damascus: Kinship and other social categories as bases of political action, 1830–1841," *History of the Family* 16 (2011): 110.

They gravitated around the Ġazzī family, who represented the *Šāfiʿī maḏhab*.[57] The *Šāfiʿī maḏhab* was a secondary *maḏhab* in the Ottoman Empire as the state relied on *Ḥanafī* jurisprudence while recognizing legally the othe*r fiqh* schools. In *Bilād al-Šām* however, before the Ottoman conquest, the *Šāfiʿī maḏhab* had been dominant. The Ottoman rule had given precedence to the *Ḥanafī maḏhab* in the province through reserving various religious positions to its followers but many subjects continued to follow the *Šāfiʿī maḏhab*.[58] In most cities there was thus a *Ḥanafī*, *Šāfiʿī* and *Ḥanbalī* mufti, who all offered their *iftāʾ*, or legal opinion, to the population.[59] The *Šāfiʿī* mufti often benefited from more leeway in his legal opinions.

While the *Ḥanafī* ulema enjoyed the official positions of the state, the *Šāfiʿī* ulema were left with positions in the secondary mosques or Quranic schools.[60] Many of the newcomer ulema to the city were also *Šāfiʿī*, this *fiqh* school was therefore prominent among non-elites.[61] The ulema of these neighborhoods were also often involved in trade beside their positions in the secondary mosques and madrasas which did not allow them to make a living. They were found among the guilds, and in local trade networks.[62] Ulema of important families such as the al-Ḫānī and al-Bayṭār resided in the Maydān. The Maydān was also home to a Druze population and a large North African population, which increased with the arrival of the famous Algerian exile ʿAbd al-Qāḍīr al Ġazāʾirī. The Naqšbandī *ṭarīqa* was quite present in the Maydān neighborhood, and its main shaykhs originated from it.

The division between these two factions was exacerbated by the nature of political power in the 19th century. There was a huge turnover of governors in the city, they were often

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[57] al-Usṭwānī, *Mašāhid,* 142.
[58] A certain number of ulema however changed their *maḏhab.* See Abdul-Karim Rafeq, "Relations between the Syrian "'Ulamā'" and the Ottoman State in the Eighteenth Century," *Oriente Moderno* 18, 79, no. 1 (1999): 67-95.
[59] Khoury, *Urban Notables,* 14.
[60] Schilcher, *Families in Politics*, 14-15; Weissman, *Taste of Modernity*, 59.
[61] Abu Manneh, *Studies of Islam,* 66.
[62] Naʿīsa, *Muǧtamaʿ,* 412.

appointed for a year only.[63] In order to build their power base, governors often chose to rely on one faction only, thus deepening the competition between the two groups.[64]

There were adepts of the *ṭarīqa* Naqšbandīya both in the city center and the Maydān factions. Among the ʿAẓm faction, the most notables Naqšbandī were Ḥassan ibn ʿUmar al-Shaṭī (*Ḥanbalī*) and Ḥussaīn al-Murādī (*Ḥanafī*). However, it seems that the Naqšbandīya-Ḫalidiyya was most popular among the Maydānīs and *Šāfiʿīs*, represented by their ulema Ḥassan al-Bayṭār, the representative of Shaykh Ḫalid in the Maydān.[65] Ḥassan al-Bayṭār had considerable power in the neighborhood and benefited from the patronage of the Ġazzī family.[66]

Shaykh Ḫalid created strong links with the Ġazzī family, both through marriage and through ordering a *ḫalīfa* from the family. He also married into the Kurdish Maydānī Ḫānī family, and named Muḥammad al-Ḫānī as his *ḫalīfa*.[67] Kurdish families who arrived recently to the city and followed the Šāfiʿī *maḏhab* seem to have been predominant among the Naqšbandīs.

The division of the Naqšbandī *ṭarīqa* into an ʿAẓm-associated faction and a Maydān-associated faction is observable in the revolt against taxation in 1831. The Ġazzī family and Naqšbandī inhabitants of the Maydān led the revolt against the governor.[68] The revolt started in ʿAmara from the madrasa which had been the Naqšbandī center under Shaykh Ḫalid.[69] It spread to another Naqšbandī stronghold in Sūwayqa. However, the Ottoman troops took refuge in the Muʿalaq mosque in the ʿAmāra, which was led by the

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[63] See this turnover in the history of the city by al-Usṭwānī, *Mašāhid.*
[64] Leila Hudson, "Reading Al-Sha'arani: The Sufi Genealogy of Islamic Modernism in Late Ottoman Damascus," *Journal of Islamic Studies* 15, no. 1 (2004): 59.
[65] Weismann, *Taste of Modernity,* 119.
[66] Ibid, 207.
[67] Abu Manneh, Studies on Islam, 8; F. de Jong, *Sufi orders in Ottoman and post-Ottoman Egypt and the Middle East : collected studies*, Analecta Isisiana (Istanbul: Isis Press, 2000), 57.
[68] Schilcher, *Families in Politics*, 172.
[69] Hudson, *"Reading Al-Sha'arani,"* 57.

Naqšbandīs close to the ʿAẓm faction.[70] Naqšbandīs were thus found as important political actors on both sides of the revolt.

The arrival of Shaykh Ḫalid and the patronage of the Ottoman government threatened the monopoly of the *Ḥanafī* ʿAẓm faction over the official positions. Shaykh Ḫalid and his *ḫulafāʾ* were quite critical of the official ulema whom they accused of monopolizing resources and exploiting the peasantry. They also accused them of taking fees illegally for interventions in disputes or other cases in which their expertise was called upon. Shaykh Ḫalid was adamant that the ulema needed to be reformed, because they owed their present positions to their family or social origin not to their merit. He called upon a recruitment of the high ulema based upon knowledge rather than inherited status. This criticism, continued by his *ḫulafāʾ*, contributed to delegitimize the official *Ḥanafī* ulema.[71] It was part of a larger transformation of Ottoman society characterized by increasing challenges to inherited status.

The elite ulema also suffered from the arrival of the Algerian *ʿalim* ʿAbd al-Qāḍīr al Ğazāʾirī in 1855. He had led the insurrection against the French in Algeria, had been captured and eventually sent to the Ottoman Empire. He chose to settle in Damascus with his family. He created a learning circle which studied the work of Ibn 'Arabi. Many disciples of Muḥammad al-Ḫānī joined this circle. ʿAbd al-Qāḍīr al Ğazāʾirī was quite critical of the elite ulema and accused them of corruption.[72]

Therefore, because of the delegitimization of the elite ulema, the shaykhs of secondary mosques or *ṭuruq* obtained more intellectual influence and were the ones who guided the population through the transformations of the society. Some of them were quite vocal against foreign imperialism, the Islahat Fermanı and other reforms. Indeed, because these ulema often

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[70] Ibid, 58.
[71] Weismann, *Sufism on the Eve of Reform,* 72; Abu-Manneh, *The Sultan and the Bureaucracy*, 261.
[72] Weismann, *Taste of Modernity,* 203.

engaged in regional trade or handicrafts, they were more likely to suffer from the competition with Christians merchants and from the transformation of the economy.[73]

The city center notables and the elite ulema during the *Tanzimat* were losing in status and were being replaced by newcomers who recently gained access to positions that had previously been reserved for their faction. Indeed, the new positions created in the city during the process of centralization, such as the *nāẓir al-āwqāf* and positions in the newly created *maǧlis,* were increasingly awarded to members of the local faction. It was often Kurds or North-Africans who had access to these positions, they were *Šāfiʿī* or *Mālikī*.[74] Among them were numerous Naqšbandīs associated with the Ġazzī faction.

Upon his death in 1827, Shaykh Ḥalid was harshly criticized by various opponents. Wahābī-s took advantage of his passing to accuse him of asking his followers to worship him as a saint in order to obtain political power.[75] The Damascene ulema at first refuted these accusations. Yet, many of his initial supporters among the city center elite gradually moved away from the Naqšbandīya. They must have been relieved to get rid of an individual who limited their exercise of power and was eager to criticize their actions as opposed to Islamic law. The *Ḥanafī* mufti however wrote letters to defend Shaykh Ḥalid against those accusations.[76]

The Maydānī Naqšbandī ulema thus bore the legacy of Shaykh Ḥalid. It was not a coincidence that Muḥammad al-Ḫānī, a Kurdish Maydānī ʿalim, was chosen as the successor of Ḫalid. Yet, the latter's succession did not go smoothly. Shaykh Ḥalid before his death chose Ismāʿīl al Šīrwānī to be his successor. However, he soon left for Daghestan, where he eventually was instrumental in supporting the war effort against the Russian army, similarly

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[73] Naʿīsa, *Muǧtamaʿ,* 412.
[74] Kamal S. Salibi, "The 1860 Upheaval in Damascus as Seen by Al- Sayyid Muhammad Abu'l-Su'ud Al-Hasibi, Notable and Later *Naqib Al-Ashraf* of the City" in *Beginnings of Modernization in the Middle East : The Nineteenth Century*, ed.William Roe Polk and Richard L. Chambers (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1968), 189.
[75] Weismann, *The Naqshbandiyya*, 90.
[76] BOA, HAT.892.39387, July 12th 1828.

to another Naqšbandī-H̱alidi shaykh, the famous Imam Šāmil. In Damascus, Šīrwānī was replaced by Muḥammad al-H̱ānī, who settled his headquarters in the Murādīyya mosque in the Maydān. He led the order from 1832 to 1860.[77]

After the death of Shaykh H̱alid, various decisions-makers in Istanbul attempted to either co-opt his successors or use a divide and rule policy to contain the influence of the *ṭarīqā*. During the Egyptian period, some Naqšbandīs were invited to Istanbul by the Sultan in order to win their support.[78] However, the central government seems not to have been pleased by the Maydānī domination of the Naqšbandīya, notably because of the role of the Maydān in the rebellion against the governor which favored the Egyptian takeover in 1831. The Maydān was also a critical neighborhood where rebellions against taxation and conscription often started, and its relationship with Bedouin tribes through commerce also threatened to turn the Naqšbandīya into a tool of opposition rather than support of the Ottoman reforms. Thus, the government attempted to diffuse the authority of al-H̱ānī by sending the brother of Shaykh H̱alid, Maḥmūd al-Ṣaḥīb, from Kurdistan to Damascus in 1843. He was instructed to take control of the *ṭarīqa* and was named by the governor Mehmet Reşid Paşa as the leader of the Takīya Sulaymānīya.[79] It was an attempt to prevent Muḥammad al-H̱ānī from enjoying the same popularity and influence than Shaykh H̱alid. Governors also saw the Naqšbandīya as a tool of power, and some attempted to gain control of it to further their careers. For example, the governor Necip Pasha built a *zāwīya* on the tomb of Shaykh H̱alid in Ṣālḥīya in 1842 and named at his head another deputy of Shaykh H̱alid, Muḥammad al Faraqī.[80]

Albeit these attempts at limiting the influence of Maydānī Naqšbandīs, they managed to weave links of reciprocity with important actors in Istanbul which allowed them to retain power. First of all, they obtained the support of the *Šayḫ al-Islām* Arif Hikmet Bey

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[77] Ibid, 96.
[78] Na'īsa, *Muǧtama'*,413.
[79] Weismann, *Taste of Modernity,* 82; Abu-Manneh, *Studies on Islam,* 57.
[80] Abu-Manneh, *Studies on Islam,* 57, 108.

(1846-1854). His father was a Naqšbandī and wrote a panegyric of Shaykh Ḫalid.[81] Arif Hikmet Bey studied with the Egyptian alim Ḥassan al-ʿAṭṭār as did the important Naqšbandīs of the Maydān.[82] He asked a diploma from the Damascene *āmīn al-fatwā*, Muḥammad Āmin ibn ʿĀbidīn.[83] In 1847, Arif Hikmet Bey invited Damascene Naqšbandīs such as Muḥammad Āmin ibn ʿĀbidīn, 'Abd al-Raḥman al-Ṭībī and Ḥassan al-Bayṭār to Istanbul and gave them a stipend.[84]

The Damascene Naqšbandīs also created links with Naqšbandī members of the Palace who were sent to Damascus as governors. For example, Gurcu Necip Paşa was the governor of the city in 1841-1842. Necip Pasha's wife was a favorite of the mother of the Sultan Abdülmecid.[85] He was close to Hüsrev Paşa, who had just been fired in 1840 for opposing the reforms promulgated by Mehmed Reşid Paşa.[86] It was probably for this reason that Necip Paşa was sent as governor of Damascus, to keep him away from Istanbul. He built a mausoleum on the tomb of Shaykh Ḫalid.[87] He was then named to Baghdad where he stayed until 1849 and contributed to revive the Naqšbandīya and fought the spread of Wahhabi ideas in the city.[88]

Then, another member of the Palace was Musa Safveti Pasha, named governor of Damascus from 1845 to 1848. Originally from Crimea, his father Rifat Ebbubekir Effendi had been the secretary of the aforementioned Gürcu Necip Pasha.[89] His brother Mustafa Efendi was already the *defterdar* of the Damascus.[90] During his stay in the city, he was introduced to the *ṭarīqa* Naqšbandīya-Ḫalidiyya by Muḥammad al-Ḫānī, the successor of Shaykh Ḫalid.

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[81] Ibid, 106.
[82] Abu-Manneh, "Four Letters of Cheikh Hasan al-'Attar to Cheikh Tahir al- Husayni of Jerusalem," *Arabica,* vol. 50, no. 1 (2003): 83 ; Commins, *Islamic Reform*, 31-33.
[83] Weismann, *Taste of Modernity,* 67.
[84] Schilcher, *Families in Politics,* 166.
[85] F.O. 195/196, Wood-Canning, June 22nd 1842.
[86] Abu-Manneh, *Studies on Islam*, 108.
[87] Ibid, 108.
[88] Abu-Manneh, "The Khâlidiyya and the Salafiyya in Baghdad after Cheikh Khâlid," *Journal of the History of Sufism* 5 (2007): 32.
[89] Christoph Herzog, *Osmanische Herrschaft und Modernisierung im Irak* (Bamberg: University of Bamberg Press, 2012), 97.
[90] F.O. 78/660, Wood- Aberdeen, April 10th 1846.

When he returned to Istanbul, he became involved in the *tekke* Naqšbandīya-Ḫalidiyya in Eminönü. Other statesmen such as Pertev Paş and Hüsrev Paşa were linked to this *tekke*.[91]

In addition to governors, military leaders in charge of the army were also influenced by the *ṭarīqa*. For example, the *mušīr* in 1848, Namik Paşa did not take decisions without his Naqšbandī shaykh. In 1848, the cholera was on its way to reach Damascus. Namik Paşa held a council to discuss how to deal with the matter medically. He invited his Naqšbandī shaykh and a dervish together with doctors and members of the *maǧlis* to assist the council. The shaykh said that there was no need to take measures against cholera for the dervish had seen a dream in which Damascus was protected from the plague and cholera because it was a holy ground. The commander in chief was relieved, they prayed together, and he dismissed the council. However, the disease did enter the city, contrary to the predictions of the shaykh and ended up killing more than 21 000 individuals. 1/5th of the troops succumbed to the decease.[92]

These links with the Palace members proved useful when this faction obtained important positions which had been monopolized by bureaucrats. We have seen that the bureaucrats had come to power around the redaction of the Gülhane decree in 1839. Yet in 1848, the members of the Palace tilted the balance of power in their favor, albeit temporarily. Riza Hassan Paşa, the protector of Musa Safveti Paşa came back to power after being initially sidelined by the success of bureaucrats and especially his enemy Mustafa Reşid Paşa. Musa Safveti Paşa benefited from this favorable turn and became minister of finances in 1853. He gave a subvention to Muhammad al-Ḫānī and invited him to Istanbul. In 1859, he also brought his son of to the capital.[93]

Riza Hassan Paşa, his protégé Musa Safveti Paşa, and Mehmed Said Paşa Damad, the brother in law of the sultan Abdülmecid who had been serasker and later minister of

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[91] Abu-Manneh, *Studies on Islam*, 109.
[92] F.O. 195/291, Wood-Canning, September 28th 1848.
[93] Commins, *Islamic Reform*. 36.

commerce,[94] attempted to get rid of the Grand Vizier Mustafa Reşid Paşa. They managed to convince the sultan to demote him of his position. Yet, he soon was able to regain his post. When he came back to power, Mustafa Reşid Paşa punished Mehmed Said Paşa Damad and sent him to Damascus as a governor to keep him at bay from political developments in Istanbul.[95] The French consul of Damascus, Mr. de Ségur, mentioned that Mehmed Said Paşa Damad had been sent to Damascus because he opposed all the reforms of the Grand Vizier.[96] There is a pattern of appointments as governors of Damascus of individuals who opposed the reforms, especially regarding the place of non-Muslims. Some of them were members of the Naqšbandīya and created links of solidarity and patronage with Damascene ulema. These appointments also contributed to shaping the population's opinion regarding the reforms. Mehmed Said Damad saw in the bureaucracy a threat to the power of the Sultan. He criticized reforms others than in the military field. These new laws, as the Civil code of 1843, limited his freedom of action as governor and as member of the military. He was quite critical of the intervention of foreign powers in the empire, that he saw as feeding the power of Christian patriarchs. He blamed Mustafa Reşid Paşa for supporting ideologies that threatened the sultanate.[97] Al-Usṭwānī also mentioned that Mehmed Said Damad, because of his religious beliefs made things difficult for patriarchs and consuls in the city.[98]

Even if this group of officials failed to get rid of Mustafa Reşid Paşa, the balance of power between bureaucrats and the Palace members reached an equilibrium in the early 1850's. Damad Mehmed Ali, another Naqšbandī member of the Palace and a relative of Abdülmecid, obtained the position of Grand Vizier in 1852. He attempted to retrograde on the

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[94] Butrus Abu-Manneh, "The Sultan and the Bureaucracy: The Anti-*Tanzimat* Concepts of Grand Vizier Mahmud Nedim Pasa," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 22, no. 3 (August 1990): 258.
[95] A.E. 67/CPC, vol.2, Vallegue-de la Hitte, January 2nd 1850.
[96] A.E. CCC, vol. 3, De Segur, January 2nd 1850.
[97] Abu-Manneh, *The Sultan and the Bureaucracy,* 260.
[98] al-Usṭwānī, *Mašāhid,* 153.

previous reforms of the administration.[99] Musa Safveti Paşa, Damad Mehmed Ali, Mehmed Said Damad and Riza Hassan Paşa, who had links to the Naqšbandīya in Damascus thus benefited from a position of influence in the 1850's. In Damascus, this turn of events favored Muḥammad al-Ḫānī who enjoyed Musa Safveti Paşa's protection.

At the same time the transformations of the relationship between the *maǧlis* and governors seemed to have favored the local faction in this period. The *maǧlis* formed in 1850 by the governor included mostly Maydāni Damascenes and various elements of the Ġazzī faction. The elite ulema and notables as well as important *āšrāf* were not chosen for the *maǧlis*, which created an outrage in the city.[100] Then, the Ġazzī family managed to get important positions in the administration of *waqf*, such as *mutawalī* of the Omayyad mosque, by accusing their rivals of corruption. In addition, in 1850 the *Ḥanafī* mufti from the Murādī family passed away. It benefited the *Šāfiʿī* mufti who gained in influence.[101]

Thanks to their links with the Palace faction, the Naqšbandīs in Damascus did not initially suffer from the power grab of Ali and Fuad Paşa in 1856. While the bureaucrats close to the *ṭarīqa* Naqšbandīya were sidelined, the Palace had initially allied with Ali and Fuad Paşa with whom they had a common opponent, Mustafa Reşid Paşa. In addition, while the Naqšbandīs had lost some power in Istanbul, especially in the bureaucracy, they were still quite popular in the provinces. In Damascus, those hostile towards the taxation reforms and the conscription as well as against the equality between Muslims and non-Muslim found in the Naqšbandīya a medium to challenge the reforms.

While Naqšbandīs had been strong supporters of the sultan after the decree of 1839, many of its important members were quite opposed to the measures taken after the Crimean War. The sultan had been stripped of his legitimacy by not adhering to Islamic legislation. In

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[99] Abu Manneh, "The Later *Tanzimat* and the Ottoman Legacy in the Near Eastern Successor states," in *Transformed Landscapes: Essays on Palestine and the Middle East in Honor of Walid Khalidi,* ed. Camille Mansour and Leila Fawaz (Cairo: American University of Cairo Press, 2009), 68.
[100] al-Usṭwānī, *Mašāhid,* 149, 150.
[101] Ibid, 142.

the eyes of many, the decree of 1856 turned him into an apostate because it contradicted *fiqh* precepts.[102] In Damascus, even the emir ʿAbd al-Qādīr al Ǧazāʾirī, who received multiple awards for his role in saving Christians during the violence of 1860 in Damascus, was very critical of the decree of 1856 which he saw as contravening Islamic law.[103]

The strategy of legitimization used by the sultans in the first part of the 19th century, based on a reference to the concept of the caliphate, was a double-sided sword. As long as the sultans in appearance adhered to Islamic law it was a strong tool of loyalty building. Yet, in case these precepts were not respected, this strategy turned against them, for Islamic law was used as a tool of delegitimization. Naqšbandīs emphasized this conception of power as a contract between the caliph and the population on the condition of the respect of Islamic precepts. It was also underlined later on by the Young Ottomans who opposed Ali and Fuad Paşa's legislation which contradicted Islamic law.[104]

In Damascus, members of the Naqšbandīya also became very critical of the new reforms. Among others, Ḥassan al-Bayṭār, the representative of Shaykh Ḫalid in the Maydān, was especially critical of foreign intervention and resented the place of non-Muslims in the empire which he saw as a threat to the *umma*.[105] The *Šāfiʿī* mufti ʿUmar al Ġazzī also opposed numerous government policies when it came to the status of non-Muslims and foreigners.[106] Opposition to the changes introduced by the Islahat Fermanı regarding the position of non-Muslims was encouraged by some governors who were members of *ṭarīqā* Naqšbandīya. They strengthened the role of the Naqšbandīya and the *Šāfiʿī* understanding of the *ḏimma* in Damascus. Damascene Naqšbandīs continued to benefit from the support of various governors after the Crimean War. For example, the son of the aforementioned Gürcü

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[102] Farah, *The Politics of Interventionism,* 729.
[103] A.E. 67/CPC, vol. 5/6, Bullar-Walewski, January 21st 1857.
[104] Mardin, *Genesis,* 294, 313.
[105] Ibid, 207.
[106] al-Usṭwānī, *Mašāhid,* 142.

Necip Pasha, Mahmud Nedim Paşa was named governor of Damascus in 1855.[107] He was a member of the *ṭarīqā* Naqšbandīya. He read the Islahat Fermanı to the *maǧlis*, although he was personally opposed to this reform.[108] Mahmud Nedim was governor of Damascus when the *bedel i-askeri* was asked from Christians and saw the opposition of the Greek Orthodox and Greek Catholics to the payment of this tax. He wrote a letter to Istanbul regarding this rebellion blaming the consuls.[109] In 1861, he wrote a treaty to Sultan Abdulaziz in which he criticized the reforms which contradict religious law which he saw as a threat to the sultan.[110] He criticized the elite ulema for spreading corruption. He was very critical of Sutlan Abdülmecid for his lavish spending and for his lack of independence.[111] These governors' relationship with foreign consuls was quite conflictual. As they opposed the reforms and foreign intervention in the empire, they usually supported local interests against foreign claims and tended to slow down the application of reforms.[112] The numerous conflicts they had with consuls polarized the population.[113]

4. The Naqšbandīya against the Sultan

In Istanbul, opposition to the reforms in the post-Crimean War period was also widespread and even led to an attempted coup against the sultan, inspired in part by Naqšbandī shaykhs. The claims of the actors of this attempted coup resonated with the discourses against the reforms in Damascus. In 1859, a diverse group of individuals called the society of Martyrs (Fida'ilar cemiyeti), including adepts of the Naqšbandīya-Ḫalidiyya and military officers of the Tophane regiment, attempted to assassinate Sultan Abülmecid. This group was resentful of the decree of reform of 1856, seen as the cause of the ills of the

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[107] According to al-Usṭwānī he had previously been the governor of Beirut, al-Usṭwānī, *Mašāhid,* 161.
[108] BOA, A.MKT. 229. 23, March 19th 1856; Before that he was the serasker of the aforementioned Said Damad Paşa the brother in law of the Sultan, from 1837 to 1839. He was then named Minister of commerce from 1839 to 1840, and assistant of Mustafa Reşid Paşa from 1842 to 1854. Finally he was named governor of Damascus from 1855 to 1856.
[109] BOA, HR.MKT.161/6, May 20th 1857.
[110] Abu-Manneh, *The Sultan and the Bureaucracy*, 261.
[111] Ibid, 262.
[112] A.E. 67/CPC/vol.2, Vallegue-de la Hitte, September 6th 1850.
[113] See for example, A.E, 166/PO-Serie D/20, vol. 3, , Vallegue-Bouqueney. August 18th 1850.

empire.[114] They targeted Ali and Fuad Paşa as well as the sultan. One of its leaders was Ahmad al-Sulaymani, a member of the *ṭarīqa* Naqšbandīya-Khālidīyya.[115] Ahmad al-Sulaymani was the son of a Naqšbandī-Ḫalidi shaykh and originated from Sulaymaniyah, just as Shaykh Ḫalīd. Imam Šāmil was also a strong reference for Shaykh Ahmad al-Sulaymani.[116] According to Florian Riedler he might have studied with Mahmud al-Sahib, the brother in law of Shaykh Ḫalid, and joined him when he came to Damascus in 1832. He then went to Istanbul in 1846.[117] During the Crimean War, Ahmad al-Sulaymani had joined the army of Anatolia and Batum as a *ġāzī*, a voluntary recruit, with 3000 volunteers. He was put under the command of Husayn Daim. It was with him that he later planned the assassination of the sultan.[118] He demanded the abolition of the *Tanzimat* and the application of the *šarīʿa*.[119] Fear of foreign intervention also featured among the resentments of the society of Martyrs.[120] They demanded the abdication of Abdülmecid, who was to be replaced by his brother Abdülhamid.[121] The aims of the organization however were soon exposed and Ali and Fuad Paşa took the necessary measures by firing a main Naqšbandī member of the Palace faction, the aforementioned Mahmud Nedim, who had been governor of Damascus. Yet, his implication had not been proven. He was later on Grand Vizier multiple times from 1871 to 1876 under the sultan Abdülhamid.[122]

Abdülmecid was targeted by the group for having promulgated the reform of 1856. In Damascus, there were also strong resentments towards the sultan. For example, in 1839, the French consul in Damascus reports that a few days after Abdülmecid came to the throne,

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[114] About the Kuleli incident see Florian Riedler, "Opposition to the *Tanzimat* state : conspiracy and legitimacy in the Ottoman Empire, 1859-1878." PhD diss. (SOAS, 2003), 15; Burak Onaran, *Détroner le sultan, Deux Conjurations a l'époque des reformes ottomanes: Kuleli (1859) et Meslek (1867),* (Leuven: Peeters, 2013).
[115] Abu-Manneh, *Studies on Islam,* 126.
[116] Onaran, *Détroner le sultan*, p 226.
[117] Riedler,"Opposition", 37.
[118] Ibid, 39, 40.
[119] Onaran, *Détroner le sultan*, 117.
[120] Ibid, 120.
[121] Ibid, 139.
[122] Riedler, "Opposition," 43.

there was a rumour that the French had killed the Sultan Mahmud to put Abdülmecid, a child, to the throne so that they could control him and destroy the empire.[123] Then, there was a rumour that actually Abdülmecid had been killed by 'real believers' and his brother, who was a real defender of Muslims, had been put to the throne. According to the consul, these rumors alone led to the plundering of Christian villages in the Ḥaurān.[124] In July 1861, when the news of the death of the sultan Abdülmecid reached Damascus, the consuls mention the joy of the Muslims and their celebration. They also threatened Christians and declared that they will not pay the reparation demanded from them. Again Abdülmecid was described as an unbeliever and the massacres were described as initiated by the opposition and the supporters of Abdülaziz. They expected that Abdülaziz would annul the reforms and go back to the previous state of things. To counter this narratives, Fuad Paşa announced that the change of sultan did not modify the demands made on the population. He arrested some troublemakers and set up a curfew.[125]

In Damascus, before the violence, a pamphlet circulated which repeated some of these claims against Sultan Abülmecid. The authenticity of these writings cannot be verified, and neither can their authors be identified. However, the attested circulation of such materials had an impact on the population. These pamphlets, short and polemic in nature, could be read out-loud in coffee-shops and thus transmitted even to those who could not read among the population. One pamphlet is mentioned in the eyewitness account of a consular agent.[126] It is also mentioned in similar yet in slightly different version in *La verité sur la Syrie* de Baptistin Poujoulat.[127] Both presented this pamphlet as a letter from Muslim(s) of Damascus to Muslims of Homs. Poujoulat added that it is directed to Muslims in Aleppo and Hama as

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[123] A.E, 166/PO-Serie D/20, vol. 2, Beaudin-Roussin, July 25th 1839.
[124] Ibid.
[125] A.E. 166/PO-Serie D/20, vol. 5, Outrey-Lavalette, July 3rd 1861 and July 10th 1861.
[126] *Les Massacres du Mont Liban,* 114-115.
[127] Baptistin Poujoulat, *La vérité sur la Syrie et l'expédition française* (Paris, Gaume Frères et J. Duprey Editeurs, 1861), 230.

well.[128] According to Poujoulat, this letter was circulating in Sidon and came into the hands of the French consul there.[129]

The anonymous consular agent's copy of the letter emphasized the illegitimacy of Abdülmecid because of his departing from the *šarīʿa*, his use of paintings depicting human beings and self-portraits and his displaying of European crosses and decorations. The letter called for the overthrow of Abdülmecid and his replacement with his son Murad. He referred to a secret meeting that took place in the capital two years before composed of ulema, viziers and ulema, in which a decision was taken to get rid of the sultan. The author surely referred to the Kuleli affair which took place in 1859. He claimed that Christians started to despise the holy law and to transgress their limits and obligations, which had been instituted at the time of ʿUmar ibn al-Ḫaṭāb. They started to behave as if they were superior to Muslims, by asking them to stand in front of them, to let them pass first in meetings, etc. The author then listed the ground on which an attack against Christians would be considered legitimate. First, Christians no longer paid the *ǧizya*, and thus could be attacked in their life, property and honor, their houses and churches no longer have to be protected. Interestingly he cited *fiqh* juridical opinions from India and Bukhara stating that Christians should not become strong, and thus all means should be used to prevent it. He also mentioned that the Naqšbandī order is not opposed to the destruction of Christians.

Finally the author found in the current context, with foreign powers weakened by the Crimean war, an auspicious opportunity to attack Christians. He presented the killing of Christians as a preemptive defense against Christians who had the intention to appropriate all of Muslims possessions and to destroy them, with the help of their foreign allies. Then, he considered necessary to destroy them to prevent them acting as a fifth column for Europeans

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[128] Ibid, 230.
[129] The letter copied in Poujoulat follows the same lines and the same references, almost line by line, yet it demands for the enthronement of the brother of the Sultan, Abdülaziz and not his son Murad. Poujoulat, *La vérité sur la Syrie,* 230.

in the region in times of war. Especially the Christians of Mount Lebanon were described as intriguing and as acting in favor of Europeans. The decision was thus taken to get rid of all the Christians of Syria.[130]

Similar alarmist letters were found by the government in 1861. They were written by the Naqšbandī Shaykh Mehmed in Istanbul from the family of Imadiye (Amedi, Kurdistan) which warned the Kurdish chiefs of Kurdistan that Syria and Mount Lebanon had been given by the Ottoman government to foreign countries and demanded help. The government attempted to put an end to these rumors which damaged the legitimacy of the state.[131] Foreign intervention in *Bilād al-Šām* was an important basis of political mobilization among the Naqšbandīs.

In conclusion, the discussions around the *ḏimma* in learned circles and among the population point to its dynamic status and its intrinsic link to state legitimacy. The question of whether or not the *ḏimma* was abolished by the reforms had important consequences for inter-confessional relations. While within the official *Ḥanafī fiqh* school, some solutions were brought forward to uphold this social contract in the face of legal equality, the *Ḥanafī* ulema had gradually lost their influence locally and thus failed to explain the reforms to the population. The *Šāfiʿī* understanding of the *ḏimma* thus dominated, encouraged by the Naqšbandī ulema who increasingly voiced their opposition to the reforms of the society in the post-Crimean war period. Membership in the Naqšbandīya created links of solidarity and patronage between Damascene ulema and important political actors in Istanbul who opposed the reforms wished by Fuad and Ali Paşa. The abolition of the *ḏimma* came to symbolically represent the loss of the Islamic nature of the state and was thus a strong basis of political

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[130] *Les Massacres du Mont Liban,* 114, 115.
[131] BOA, A.MKT.UM.460.100, March 10th 1861.

opposition. It featured extensively in the discourses which surrounded the attack against Christians in Damascus in 1860.

CHAPTER 7: CONTROLLING THE RURAL AND URBAN RESOURCES

The structural transformations of Ottoman society, including great power competition, the *Tanzimat* reforms and the development of new governmentality tools, politicized religious identities and led to the development of sectarian politics and eventually contributed to violence. Beyond the development of inter-confessional tensions and violence, these transformations also affected interpersonal relations and especially strategies for access to resources. The tools to gain access to economic and political means changed through this period. New opportunities for personal gain transformed the nature of economic distribution among the different social groups. Land ownership, tax-farming and commerce became the ground of an intense competition for economic power which ultimately played a role in the violence of 1860. In this competition, non-Muslims who enjoyed the protection of foreign powers had considerable advantages. The status of protégé became the locus of a conflict over sovereignty between foreign powers and the Ottoman Empire. It also led to tensions in Damascus and efforts to counter these developments through the use of the provincial *maǧlis*.

This chapter will deconstruct the notion of the inter-confessional, and look at the role of interpersonal conflicts and economic competition in shaping strategies of survival, delegitimization techniques and discourses which ultimately affected how religious groups saw each other. First, we will analyse the different aspects of the status of foreign protégé. Second, we will explore how competition in trade and the economic advantages enjoyed by protégés affected inter-confessional relations. Finally, we will explore the impact of foreign protection on land ownership and tax-farming.

1. Foreign Intervention and Protection

1.1 The Protégé Status

The arrival of the Egyptian army to *Bilād al-Šām* in 1832 represents a turning point which affected inter-confessional relations in a deep manner and left an imprint on Damascene society. Among these various changes introduced by the Egyptians, the introduction of foreign consuls and their awarding of foreign protection to local Christians and Jews transformed the nature of the competition for access to resources.

According to the capitulations granted to allied sovereigns as unilateral privileges to facilitate trade in the 16th century, consuls and ambassadors could give their protection to foreigners, awarding them tax exemptions and giving them some level of extraterritoriality. This protection started to be extended to Ottoman subjects working for the consulates in the beginning in the 17th century, mostly to non-Muslims.[132] In the 19th century, however because of the change in the balance of power in favour of European governments, foreign protection of Ottoman subjects became increasingly detrimental to the Ottoman government's interests.[133] Then, in the same period, protection statuses were increasing sold to merchants and notables completely unrelated to the consulates.[134] Non-Muslims protégés were seen to have a tremendous advantage in trade and economic competition compared the rest of the Muslim population.[135] It gave rise to inter-confessional tensions, figuring on the background

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[132] Bernard Heyberger, "Conclusion. Pour une histoire des notions de "minorités" et de "protection,"" in *Minorités en Méditerranée au XIXe siècle, Identités, identifications, circulations, dir.* Valérie Assan, Bernard Heyberger et Jakob Vogel (Rennes: Presses Universitaires de Rennes, 2019), 253, 254; Maurits H. van den Boogert, "Intermediaries Par Excellence? Ottoman Dragomans in the Eighteenth Century," in *Hommes de l'entre-deux. Parcours individuels et portraits de groupes sur la frontière de la Méditerranée (XVIe-XXe siècle)*, ed. Bernard Heyberger and Chantal Verdeil (Paris: Les Indes savantes- Rivages des Xantons, 2009), 101; Maurits H. van den Boogert, *The Capitulations and the Ottoman Legal System, Qadis, Consuls and Beratlıs in the 18th Century* (Leiden: Brill, 2005), 8.

[133] Boogert, *The Capitulations,* 8.

[134] A.E., 166/PO-Serie D/20, vol. 3, de Bourville-de Bourqueney, December 11th 1847; Edwards*, La Syrie*, 77; It was not the case beforehand, on the 18th century see Boogert, *The Capitulations,* 25, 90.

[135] Joel Beinin, *Workers and Peasants in the Modern Middle East* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 45-47. Schilcher, *Families in Politics,* 82.

of the various accounts of violence in the mid-19th century.[136] The Ottoman government repeatedly attempted to put an end to this system but failed to do so.[137]

To counter the rise of foreign protection the Ottoman government itself started to award his own *berats* to merchants. It created two statuses of merchants which would benefit from the same privileges than foreigners: *Avrupa tüccarı* for non-Muslims and *Hayriye tüccarı* for Muslims. While the program had some level of success in Aleppo, where wealthy merchants asked to be benefit from this status, it did not meet with the same results in Damascus where foreign protection dominated and multiplied exponentially.[138]

Before foreign protection was introduced in Damascus, Christians and Jews relied on different forms of political patronage. Military leaders, governors and emirs were sought upon for protection, especially when they had a strong local power base.[139] The Egyptian rule however challenged these various patronage networks by replacing the elites. In the process, it put an end to various reciprocal relationships which Christians and Jews had built with local power-holders, especially *āġāwāt.*[140] Christians and Jews thus turned to foreign consuls as substitute patrons.[141]

For example, ʿAlī āġā Ḫazīna-Kātibī an *ʿayān* of Damascus and a patron to local Christians,[142] was executed by the governor in 1840.[143] He had been instrumental in protecting Christians during the revolt against the governor in 1830.[144] Bribes to powerful *āġāwāt* were usually the most effective way to remain safe during periods of political

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[136] For Aleppo see Feras Krimsti, *Die Unruhen von 1850 in Aleppo: Gewalt im urbanen Raum,* (Berlin: Klaus Schwarz, 2014); For a general analysis of the violence in mid-19th century Syria see in Bruce Masters, *Christians and Jews.*

[137] Sarah Abrevaya Stein, *Extraterritorial Dreams: European Citizenship, Sephardi Jews, and the Ottoman Twentieth Century* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2016), 15.

[138] Bruce Masters, "The Sultan's Entrepreneurs: The Avrupa Tuccaris and the Hayriye Tuccaris in Syria," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 24, no. 4 (1992): 580.

[139] al-Dimashqī, *Tārīḫ ḥawādiṯ,* 79.

[140] Military leaders; al-Usṭwānī, *Mašāhid,* 38; Beinin, *Workers and Peasants,* 45-47; Schilcher, *Families in Politics,* 82.

[141] al-Usṭwānī, *Mašāhid, 38;.* Beinin, *Workers and Peasants,* 45-4; Schilcher, *Families in Politics,* 82.

[142] al-Qasāṭlī , *al-Rawḍa,* 88.

[143] al-Dimashqī, *Tārīḫ ḥawādiṯ,* 186

[144] al-Qasāṭlī , *al-Rawḍa,* 88.

upheaval.[145] In terms of actual physical protection, foreign protection was usually less effective. Consuls could not prevent mass violence against confessional groups. They could only encourage punishment or reparations after the facts. Local forms of protection, especially from military chiefs and governors were much more effective in protecting non-Muslims lives and property in times of social upheaval. This difference in the ability to protect explains in part the ineffectiveness of the usual mechanisms of violence prevention and containment during attacks against Christians in the mid-19th century.

While both types of protection shared similarities, older forms of protection were usually restricted to members of elite families, usually scribes or accountants. On the other hand, foreign protection could be purchased by anyone having the sufficient resources. Foreign protection thus allowed for more social mobility, giving the opportunity to new families to access the same status as elite scribal families.

In 1842, the governor of Damascus Necip Paşa complained to Istanbul that the French consul protected half of the city.[146] In reality, according to the list of official protégés send by the French consul to the French foreign minister, there were 130 protégés, including forty-five French subjects (Algerians included), twenty-seven 'Greeks' protected at the demand of the Greek consul of Beirut, six Spanish or Italian clergy members, ten employees of the consulate, eleven protégés' employees, twenty-seven foreigners and convents' employees.[147] The French consul did not distinguish between all these categories of protégés. The British consul on the other hand made a distinction between those who were actual protégés because they were foreigners or claimed to have foreign origin and those who enjoyed this status temporarily because of their employment. While the French consul listed employees of

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[145] Another example is the Emir Bašīr Šihāb of Mount Lebanon who had patronized numerous Christians scribes and merchants but when he was deposed after the departure of the Egyptians in 1840 these relationships withered. His successor Emir Bašīr III had neither the charisma nor the power base of his predecessor and failed to assume the same role. Farah, *Politics of intervention,* 57, 713, 740 . Heyberger, *La France et la protection des chrétiens maronites,* 19.

[146] A.E., CCC/98, vol. 1, Ratti-Menton-Guizot, Feburary 22nd 1842,

[147] Ibid.

foreign merchants as protégés, the British consuls considered them as temporary protégés. According to the records of the British consulate, in 1844, they had thirty-nine protégés, twenty-two of them were considered temporary.[148]

What transpires from the consuls' correspondence is that the directions received by consuls to intervene in favor of local Christians as a group were not always eagerly accepted. Indeed, while France claimed to protect all Catholics, consuls on the ground often questioned this claim for they realized that it was not the best way to build a local support for the consulate among the general population. For example, the French consul Ratti-Mention wrote to his foreign minister in 1841 that it might be more productive to seek the sympathies of Muslims rather than focus solely on Catholics, as the latter might turn towards Austria and Great Britain and leave the French consul without any influence.[149] Then, consuls often questioned the effectiveness of their interventions as protectors of certain groups against others.[150] Various consuls were quite critical of the protection status and blamed protégés for abusing the system and leading to conflictual relationships with the governor.[151]

Consuls also expressed the belief that local Christians were unreliable, corrupt, calculating and always involved in intrigues.[152] The consuls' negative view of local Christians was also due to their frustrated expectations regarding their level of gratitude and Orientalist stereotypes. The French consul in 1856, Max Outrey, commented that he was not surprised by the lack of gratitude of local Christians, because 'Christians in the Orient are full of pride and are too demanding, considering that when foreign powers fight in their favour

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[148] F.O. 195.226, Wood-Canning, May 17th 1844.
[149] A.E., 67/CPC, vol. 1, Ratti-Menton-Guizot, January 6th 1841.
[150] A.E., 18/PO/A, vol. 9, Outrey-Thouvenel, February 2nd 1856.
[151] A.E., CCC/98, vol. 1, Ratti-Menton-Thiers, December 28th 1839; F.O., 190/226, Wood-Canning, April 8th 1846; A.E., 166/PO-Serie D/20, vol. 3, de Bourville-Bourqueney, December 11th 1847.
[152] F.O., 195/601, Brant-Bulwer, February 6th 1860; A.E., 166/PO-Serie D/20, vol. 3, De Bourville-Bourqueney, February 24th 1848; F.O., 195/368, Wood-Clarendon, April 22nd 1853; A.E., 67/CPC, vol. 5, Outrey-Walewski, July 5th 1857; It was a widespread stereotype which is found also towards Oriental Christians in Rome, see Heyberger, "Chrétiens orientaux".

they are only doing their duty'.[153] Instilled by narratives of Ottoman despotism and foreign

saviour narrative, the consuls expected local Christians to identify with them and demonstrate

a high level of loyalty and gratefulness. However, they soon realized that local Christians and

Jews used foreign protection to enhance their place in local society, not to escape it. Foreign

consuls were one of the various patrons that local Christians and Jews relied upon, they

relation was thus not exclusive. Consuls often criticized the agency of their protégés in using

protection and Ottoman subjecthood to their own advantage and to escape both Ottoman and

foreign jurisdictions.[154]

Acquiring protégé status meant flexibility. Specifically, it gave them the ability to

function as intermediaries. With such status, they were able to present themselves as

Ottomans in some cases and in other cases as foreigners. The protégé enjoyed the rights given

to Ottoman subjects but none of the responsibilities. In addition, they were not subjected to

the responsibilities of their protector state in the same manner than foreign citizens. They did

not really become a citizen of the foreign state nor remain a full citizen of their government.

They neither paid taxes in the Ottoman Empire nor in a foreign country. The agency of local

Christians and Jews was an important factor in shaping the dynamics of protection and in

taking advantage of the various jurisdictions under which they fell. This situation became

problematic when both sides, the Ottoman and the European governments started to

implement stricter laws regarding citizenship in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.[155]

1.2 Extraterritoriality

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[153] A.E., 67/CPC, vol. 5, Outrey-Walewski, October 24th 1856 .

[154] See the case of Mr Gedei which was discussed by the British consul Mr Wood and the French consul Mr Barbet de Jouy; F.O., 195/368, Wood-Barbet de Jouy, March 26th 1853; F.O., 195/368, F.O., 195/368, Wood-Barber de Jouy, March 31st 1853. Ratti-Menton-Wood, March 28th 1853; F.O., 195/368, Wood-Clarendon, April 2nd 1853.

[155] Stein, *Extraterritorial Dreams*, 7; Marie Carmen Smyrnelis, "Familles juives en Méditerranée. Jeux d'identité et conflits de juridiction (XIXe-XXe siècles)," in *Minorités en Méditerranée au XIXe siècle. Identités, identifications, circulations,* dir. Valérie Assan, Bernard Heyberger, Jakob Vogel, 133-145 (Rennes: Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2019); Similar issues which arose from the encounter of protection and citizenship can be found in Algeria, see Valérie Assan, "Le statut juridique des juifs algeriens dans l'Empire français et ses marges," in *Minorités en Méditerranée au XIXe siècle. Identités, identifications, circulations,* dir. Valérie Assan, Bernard Heyberger, Jakob Vogel, 121-132 (Rennes, Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2019).

One of the main benefits associated with foreign protection was extra-territoriality. In theory, if the protégé was brought to the *qāḍī* court, or imprisoned by the governor, the consul could intervene on his behalf and withdraw him from the jurisdiction of the Ottoman government. The protégé was to be judged by the consul himself, according to the law of the consul's country. In practice however, protégés were not put on trial by the consul but either kept for a short period in the consul's prison until the public uproar calmed down, or encouraged to escape to Beirut or other neighbouring cities.[156] If the case involved a prejudice against another Ottoman subject, the issue was more complicated as it should be brought in front of the Ottoman authorities.[157]

The question of extraterritoriality and foreign protection was part of a larger legal reality of the Ottoman Empire. Indeed, the Ottoman Empire was characterized by legal pluralism and the diversity of entities which could administer justice. Decisions on legal cases could first be brought to communal courts, administered by rabbis or bishops and patriarchs, if it concerned non-Muslims. The patriarchs and bishops had punishing power and some of them had their own jails. Then, *qāḍī* courts were opened to all Ottoman subjects and foreigners as well, they administered justice according to *Ḥanafī fiqh* principles. Non-Muslims could take cases to the *qāḍī* court if they thought that it would fulfil their interests more than the communal courts. A military court was also in charge of military affairs and cases involving soldiers and officers. The sultan's *maǧlis* was a recourse that could be used to question of a decision taken in the local *qāḍī* court. Then, there were consular courts which had jurisdiction over foreigners and also had prisons.[158]

Foreigners living in Damascus and Ottoman subjects under foreign protection could use the *qāḍī* court and communal courts if they pleased, yet they could refuse to be brought to

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[156] A.E., 18/PO-A, vol. 9, Outrey-Walewski, August 11th 1858,
[157] Boogert, *The Capitulations*, 44.
[158] Mariya Tait Slys, "Chapter III – Extraterritorial Consular Jurisdiction in the Ottoman Empire," in *Exporting Legality: The Rise and Fall of Extraterritorial Jurisdiction in the Ottoman Empire and China.* Graduate Institute Publications (2014): 14.

court forcibly by claiming foreign jurisdiction. While foreigners seldom used *qāḍī* courts, Ottoman protégés did extensively. Yet, at the moment of the court's decision, they could contest it by claiming to fall under foreign jurisdiction.

Extraterritoriality allowed some protégés to avoid judgement and punishment. It was seen as unfair by the population and could cause inter-confessional tension. For example, Dāʾūd ʿAbāde, a Jewish dragoman of the Prussian consulate, was involved in two trials and managed to escape judgement in both thanks to his protection status. In the summer of 1858, Dāʾūd ʿAbāde's affair with a Kurdish woman from the neighbourhood of Ṣālḥīya was discovered. He had started as a domestic servant but quickly managed to climb the social ladder and worked for the Prussian consul and became dragoman. In this position he managed to become wealthy. He is described by the British consul as a notorious troublemaker, who abused his position of power. He had managed to keep the affair secret by dressing as a woman to reach her house. The woman's husband had been assassinated not long before this affair was publicized, his body was found beheaded but with all its valuables. This aroused suspicion regarding Dāʾūd ʿAbāde's role in the murder. Enraged, the local Kurdish population asked for an exemplary punishment. The governor, rather than bringing Dāʾūd ʿAbāde in front of the *qāḍī* court, which he had the right to do in case of murder, arranged for his escape to Beirut to please the Prussian consul.[159] Because of this affair, some influential local elements crafted a petition to ask for the removal of foreigners in the city. Christians were apparently scared of the consequences of this affair and many of them remained in their houses for a few days. They had planned to ring the large bell placed upon the Catholic convent for the French emperor's holiday, Saint Napoleon, but they postponed it for fear of reprisal.[160]

Extraterritoriality was institutionalized by the creation of mixed courts. Over the 19th century, foreigners found themselves at lost in *qāḍī* court when they had to register property

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[159] A.E., 18/PO-A, vol. 9, Outrey-Walewski, August 11th 1858.
[160] Ibid; F.O., 195/601, Brant-Malmesbury, August 21st 1858.

or deal with issues of interest, forbidden under Islamic law. The discrepancies between foreign laws as applied by consuls and Ottoman law as applied by *qāḍī* rendered the administration of justice quite complicated. It encouraged foreign powers to ask for the creation of mixed courts which could take unitary decision on cases involving foreigners and protégés. A new commercial code was introduced in 1850 and its legislation relied heavily on French commercial law. Commercial courts composed of European and Ottoman judges were set up. European influence in those courts was strong,[161] adding to the perception that foreign entities used political power to protect their own economic interest in the Ottoman Empire.

At the same time, the *maǧlis* was also given judiciary power over cases of property, taxation and commercial disputes. *Qāḍī* courts were overrun by the newly created mixed commercial courts and the *maǧlis*, which became the two main bodies in the battle for justice. These two institutions competed to control the decision-making power. They were also increasingly polarized across religious lines. During the Egyptian period, Christians and Jews sat on the *maǧlis*. However, they were gradually removed. In 1848, the Ottoman governor gave the order to encourage them to leave the *maǧlis*. The members of the *maǧlis* mistreated Jewish representatives who left and Christians were asked to go to the back of the room.[162] They were suspected of giving away political secrets to foreigners. In 1849 there were sixteen members in the *maǧlis* chosen from the local elite or by patronage from Istanbul. Only the most influential received a salary. The *maǧlis* had a variety of tasks. They named secondary governors, audited the financial accounts, gave the revenue in tax farm and collected it, removed or appointed shaykhs of villages and appointed commanders of irregulars. Each of these appointments was done by bribe. It was thus both a tool of political power and wealth accumulation for the members.[163]

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[161] Commins, *Islamic Reform*, 11.
[162] F.O., 195/291, Wood-Canning, December 19th 1849.
[163] F.O., 195/291, Wood-Canning, February 13th 1849.

In Damascus, *mağlis* members managed to delay the creation of a mixed court. Yet, thanks to the efforts of the British consul Mr. Wood, the court was created in Damascus in 1850.[164] Each consul had a delegate in the court.[165] However, even after its creation, the *mağlis* attempted to hinder its actions by intervening in its meetings.[166] Then, the court members refused to apply the new commercial rules sent by Istanbul.[167] Foreigners were excluded from the court and judgments were passed according to Islamic jurisprudence, discarding documentary evidence. Thus, foreign merchants could not recover loans and interests. The British consul saw in these proceedings an attempt to get rid of foreign competitors in commerce.[168] After the repeated complains of the British consul in 1850, the governor had to change the composition of the commercial court. The new court had fifteen members, only five of them were Muslims. Europeans for the first time could seat on the commercial court.[169]

2. Economic Competition

2.1 Inter-confessional Tensions in the Marketplace

A domain in which foreign protection played an important role in inter-personal and eventually inter-confessional tensions was trade. Damascus is located at the departure of the caravan to Mecca and Medina, granting it a specific place in the regional trade network. It's various markets featured a large array of products from local artisans and the rich crops of its fertile countryside. The different souks had their own specialties, jealously protected by guilds who managed disputes, represented artisans in the court and set prices. Every trade had its guild, even the lemonade ambulant salesmen were represented. Craftsmen were protected

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[164] F.O., 195/601, Brant-Bulwer, March 16th 1859.
[165] A.E., 98/CCC, vol. 3, de Ségur-Baroche, July 14th 1851.
[166] F.O., 195/601, Brant-Bulwer, March 16th 1859.
[167] F.O., 226/105, Wood-Canning, April 6th 1850.
[168] F.O., 195/291, Wood-Canning, April 20th 1849.
[169] F.O., 226/105, Wood-Canning, June 15th 1850.

from competition through the system of the guilds. In exchange, they had to meet a certain quality of craftsmanship.[170] The movement of goods were restricted and prices were fixed.[171]

Monopolies were based upon the organization of commerce around corporate work organizations called *esnaf* or *ṭāʾifa* which ensured minimum competition, upheld the division of labor and contributed to economic stability for its members.[172] Prices and the distribution of commodities were fixed inside each *ṭāʾifa*, thus enforcing monopolies. The corporations were often closed to foreigners who at times created their own professional *ṭāʾifa*.[173] Each *ṭāʾifa* was represented in front of the government by a shaykh elected by its members.[174] Religiously mixed corporations composed of Muslims, Christians and Jews ensured a certain level of cooperation and common interests across religious groups.[175] However, starting with the Egyptian rule, the control over the market operated by corporations was threatened by the influx of foreign goods and the gradual abolition of monopolies by the Ottoman government.[176]

The city was known for its production of textile and abounded with looms. Grain and sheep trade was located in the Maydān peripheral neighborhood in the south of the city, close to the grazing lands of the Bedouin tribes. It was also located in the northern Ṣālḥīya neighborhood, known for its predominantly Kurdish population. The Bedouin tribes provided camels to the governor for the pilgrimage in exchange for their protection along the road.[177] The city was turned eastwards towards Iraq and southwards towards Jordan and the Arabian peninsula.

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[170] Douwes, *Justice and Oppression*, 105.
[171] Ibid, 107.
[172] Abdul-Karim Rafeq, "Craft Organization, Work Ethics, and the Strains of Change in Ottoman Syria," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 111, no. 3 (1991): 497.
[173] Ibid, 504.
[174] Ibid, 499.
[175] Ibid, 50; Yaron Ben-Naeh, "Urban Encounters: The Muslim-Jewish Case in the Ottoman Empire," in *Urban Encounters: The Muslim-Jewish Case in the Ottoman Empire*. Leiden: Brill, 2014), 183.
[176] Rafeq, "Craft Organization," 509.
[177] Tomoki Okawara, "The Urban Fabric of Damascus in the middle of the Nineteenth century: A Study of the Tax Register (Rüsum Defteri) of 1852," in *Frontiers of Ottoman Studies* , dir. Colin Imbert and Keiko Kiyotaki (London: I. B. Tauris, 2005), 175.

In the 19th century, this commercial ecosystem was put to a test with the abolition of monopolies and other economic reforms, but also by the influx of foreign goods into local markets, which competed with local goods. European goods arrived in larger numbers thanks to the steamship line which linked European ports to the port of Beirut. The Balta Limanı Treaty signed by the British and the Ottoman Empire in 1838 reduced import custom taxes on British products, encouraging their massive import into the empire. It was later expanded to include all European goods.[178]

Foreign industrialized textile, cheaper and of good quality, quickly overflowed the Syrian market and influenced local fashion trends to the detriment of locally produced fabric.[179] Foreign houses of commerce opened in the city and in Mount Lebanon, where they especially engaged in silk production and sale to Europe. Silk spinning factories were established with European funds and were managed by local Christian merchants.[180]

The Egyptian government also introduced innovations into local commerce. It started a policy of directly fixing prices which had been done by the *ṭāʾifa* themselves.[181] For example, it decided to fix the price of the service rendered from Bedouins to the caravan. Bedouins provided camels, cooked, and gave water to the pilgrims. When they heard that the price of their service was going to be fixed, they refused to serve.[182] Egyptians also fixed the price of agricultural products. For example, farmers who produced grapes were required to

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178 Rafeq, "Sources of Wealth,*"* 255.
179 Rafeq,*"Craft Organization,"* 510.
180 Akram Fouad Khater. *Inventing Home: Emigration, Gender, and the Middle Class in Lebanon, 1870–1920,* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press. 2001), 21, 30; Maurice Févret, "La sériciculture au Liban. Première partie : sa fortune passée,*"* in: *Revue de géographie jointe au Bulletin de la Société de géographie de Lyon et de la région lyonnaise* 24, no.3 (1949): 256. For an in-depth exploration of the silk industry in Lebanon see Dominique Chevalier, *La société du Mont-Liban à l'époque de la révolution industrielle en Europe* (Paris: P. Geuthner, 1971); F.O., 195/368, Wood-Rose, November 22nd 1852; F.O., 195/291, Wood-Canning, July 26th 1848.
181 Banī Hānī, *Tārīḫ Dimašq,* 159.
182 Ibid, 159.

send their produce to Damascus and the government would later determine a specific price for it.[183]

The combination of the influx of foreign products and commercial reforms of the government created tensions and caused economic difficulties in the city and countryside. Merchants resented the transformation of trade that took place under Ibrāhīm ʿAlī. In 1840, a rebellion was planned by the representative of merchants in the city of Damascus against the Egyptian army. It was however discovered soon enough and the representatives were put in jail.[184]

In addition, the competition between Muslims and Christian protégé merchants in Damascus increased over the years.[185] Foreign protection awarded protégés the same reduction in import taxes and a political bargaining power which they could use to further their economic interests. While corporations had provided a basis of group action across religious lines, in this period protégés came together to defend their economic interests. They thus acted as an organized status group, which in turned fostered solidarity based on the religious community.[186] This competition in which Christian protégés had an advantage due to foreign protection fed resentments which contributed to animosity towards Christians in general and ultimately to violence. Merchants and shop owners are pointed to in many chronicles as among the main instigators of the violence of Damascus in 1860.[187] The shops of Christians were among the first targets of the violence.[188] Muslim merchants were also among the first punished when Fuad Paşa arrived.[189]

Yet at the same time, there were an unprecedented number of joint ventures between Muslim and Christians in trade and commerce in this period. Members of these two religious

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[183] Ibid, 159.
[184] A.E., 166/PO-Serie D/20, vol. 2, Ratti-Menton-Thiers, October 13th 1840.
[185] Rafeq, "Sources of Wealth," 257.
[186] Göçek, *Rise of the Bourgeoisie*, 116.
[187] Ferdinand Taoutel, ed. *Wāṯa'āq tārīḫīyā ʿan Ḥalab fī al-qarn al-ṯāmin ʿašar,* Aleppo, 1958-62, vol. 3 (Beirut : al-Maṭbaʿa al-kāṯūlīkīya , 1964), 117.
[188] Ibid.
[189] Ibid, 118, 225.

groups were business partners and shared industries. The author of *Aḥwāl al-Naṣārā* mentioned that these partnerships encouraged peace.[190] Protégés could represent Muslim merchants who could also benefit from the reduced import tariffs given to protégés and relied on the protégés' bargaining power to ensure payment and delivery of goods.[191] The detailed reports included in records of bankruptcies in the consular archives show that non-Muslims and foreigners entered into joint economic ventures with Muslims.[192] These economic alliances or joint ventures enabled cooperation and alliances across religious communities. However, these alliances were based on the inequality between partners.[193] Some of the reforms, while detrimental to farmers and peasants, opened new opportunities for the commercial elite, across the religious spectrum. It also allowed for the development of a new merchant class at the expense of the traditional elite.[194]

Cooperation or conflict were determined by personal strategies but also by the nature of opportunities awarded to Damascenes. On the one hand, some reforms of the economic system benefited all elites across religious groups, and could lead to joint ventures. On the other hand, some transformations, such as the widespread attribution of foreign protection, benefited solely Christian and Jewish subjects and could cause tensions. Protégés and Muslim merchants also became competitors, especially when it came to international trade. Resentments were widespread among Muslim merchants in international trade because

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[190] *Aḥwāl al-naṣārā,* 30, 31.

[191] See the list of agents of Muslim merchants in A.E., 166/PO-Serie D/20, vol. 3, Tippel- Bouqueney, August 1st 1846; F.O., 195 601, Mishaqa-Brant, January 27th 1858; This dynamic was present since the 18Th century, see Molly Greene, Catholic Pirates and Greek Merchants: A Maritime History of the Mediterranean, Princeton Modern Greek Studies (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2010), 181; Bernard Heyberger, "Sécurité et insécurité : les chrétiens de Syrie dans l'espace méditerranéen (XVIIe - XVIIIe s)," in *Figures anonymes, figures d'elite: Pour une anatomie de l'Homo Ottomanicus,* ed. Bernard Heyberger and Meropi Anastassiadou (Istanbul: Isis, 1999), 151.

[192] A.E., Nantes, 166/PO-Serie D/20, vol. 3, Tippel-Bourqueney, August 1st 1846.

[193] Masters, *Christians and Jews*, 127.

[194] Rafeq, "Sources of Wealth," 255, 256.

protégés took advantage of their close relation with foreigners to gradually dominate this sector.[195]

The Ottoman government was uneasy about the protection status and attempted to regulate it in the late 1830's by restricting the commercial privileges to foreign merchants only and not to protégés. In 1838, an order was issued to forbid dragomans, chancellors and consuls to engage in commercial activities.[196] Yet consulates had both political and economic missions. These individuals thus continued to engage in these activities, against the official orders.[197]

Tensions were especially high in the textile trade. According to Abdul-Karim Rafeq 1/5th of the workers of the city of Damascus were involved in the textile domain.[198] The weaving industry was a source of direct or indirect revenue for a large amount of the population.[199] In the 19th century, many foreign houses of commerce became involved in the weaving of textile and its trade.[200] In 1849 the French consul made a commercial report on imports from abroad to the Syrian provinces. He mentioned that most imports from Europe to the Ottoman Empire were textiles, threads and cotton from Europe.[201]

There were increasing resentments towards foreign involvement into the textile trade. The French consul Max Outrey, in the midst of the violence of 1860, wrote a letter to his ambassador, Marquis de Lavalette, explaining that in Mount Lebanon the conflict was not between barbaric and rival nations of Druzes and Maronites, as it was portrayed by other

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[195] Beinin, *Workers and Peasants,* 45-47; Schilcher, *Families in Politics,* 82; A.E., CCC/98-1, Ratti-Menton-Soult, December 28th 1839, ; A.E., Nantes, 166/PO-Serie D/20, vol. 3, Beaudin-Tippel, January 17th 1846, and Tippel-Bouqueney, January 26th 1846.
[196] A.E., CCC/98, vol. 1, Ratti-Menton-Thiers, April 8th 1840.
[197] A.E., CCC/98, vol. 1, Ratti-Meton-Soult, December 20th 1839.
[198] Rafeq, "Craft Organization," 510.
[199], James A. Reilly, "The End of an Era: Pre-Reform Damascus in the 1820s," *Bulletin D'études Orientales* 61 (2012): 214.
[200] Févret, "La sériciculture au Liban," 256.
[201] A.E., CCC/98, vol. 3, Valberg-Ecqueville, September 7th 1849.

onlooker, but rather an attack against Europeans and their textile establishments.[202] Local textile workshops saw their profit decrease because of the competition introduced by English textile. Fabrics gradually loss their value because of the increasing competition.[203] Many workshops lost workers or sold their looms because they could not compete with the cheaper trendier foreign imports.[204] However, other workers still had to pay the share of those who left the trade because the tax allocated to the corporation remained the same. It was a heavy load for the textile corporations.[205] Attempts at a census led to rebellion, making impossible the reassessment of taxes. This situation also contributed to tensions between masters and workers.[206] In 1848, the British consul reported that the notables complained in front of him that foreign manufacture and funds had superseded the Ottoman ones and that it had reduced Ottoman subjects to poverty.[207] In the 1850's the main markets for Syrian products were Mecca and Baghdad. Damascene merchants complained that commerce in Mecca was poor because of the influx of European products.[208] In the end of the 1850's, commerce in the city indeed slowed down. Mīḫāʾīl Mišāqa wrote an article in the Beirut-based newspaper called *Ḥadīqāt al-Āḫbār* in 1860 complaining about the bad commercial situation because of the lack of sales ability of the Damascene textile.[209]

The disorders in the district of the Ḥawrān next to Damascus in this period also made it unsafe for travels and thus for the caravan to depart from Damascus. The pilgrim thus started to avoid the Ḥawrān and took the Aleppo route, thus by-passing Damascus.[210] The revenue of the caravan representing a large part of the commerce of the city, the changing of

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[202] A.E., 189/PO, vol. 10, Outrey-Lavalette, July 21st 1860.
[203] Rafeq, *"Craft Organization,"* 503.
[204] Schilcher, *Families in Politics,* 71.
[205] Rafeq, "Craft Organization," 507.
[206] Ibid, 509.
[207] F.O., 195/291, Wood-Canning, November 24th 1848.
[208] A.E., CCC/98, vol. 3, de Segur- Ecqueville, January 2nd 1850.
[209] *Ḥadīqāt al-Āḫbār,* issue 105, (Beirut), January 5th 1860.
[210] A.E., 67/CPC, vol. 5/6, Outrey- Walewski, August 1st 1856.

the route of the caravan had dire consequences.[211] The revenue of the commerce conducted

on the caravan route was also a source of financing of the local treasury which was now

lost.[212] *Āġāwāt were* involved in this long distance trade and suffered from this situation.[213]

The development of the steamship also lowered the number of pilgrims and merchandise

passing through Damascus to reach Mecca.[214] The cholera pandemics of 1848, 1850 and

1858 also slowed down commerce and long distance trade and caused the death of a great

number of ulema and notables.[215]

Muslim merchants who sold foreign fabrics also benefited from trade with Europe and

a whole *sūq* was designated for this purpose, the *sūq* of Bāb al Barīd, close to the Omayyad

mosque.[216] This is where the events of 1860 started. One may wonder why the revolt started

from one of the few markets that benefited from European intrusion into the Syrian economy.

The answers might lie in Bāb Tūmā, where Christian and Jewish merchants also made a

fortune selling European goods, but had an advantage over the merchants of Bāb al Barīd:

many benefited from protected subject status. They paid low customs taxes and thus could sell

at a lower price, while other merchants had to pay a much higher tax.[217] Then, through their

relationships with foreign consuls, protégés had access to the cheaper English yarn, ensuring

their continued production at a lower price.[218] There was an increasing inequality of wealth

within the textile trade between protégé Christian merchants and Muslim craftsmen.[219] The

wealth of Christian protégés, seen as caused by foreign intervention, was represented visually

by the building of rich houses and the use of luxurious clothing, which attracted the jealousy

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[211] Rafeq, "Craft Organization,*"* 510.
[212] James Grehan, *Everyday Life,* 76.
[213] al-Usṭwānī, *Mašāhid,* 141.
[214] Abdul-Karim Rafeq, "Damascus and the Pilgrim Caravan," in *Modernity and Culture: From the Mediterranean to the Indian Ocean,* ed. Leila Tarazi Fawaz and C.A. Bayly (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002), 138.
[215] al-Usṭwānī, *Mašāhid,* 141.
[216] Rafeq, "Impact of Europe," 422; See map in Annex 1.
[217] Beinin, *Workers and Peasants*, 45-47; Schilcher, *Families in Politics*, 82; Khater, *Inventing home*, 30.
[218] Rafeq, "Craft Organization," 507.
[219] Rafeq, "Damascus and the Pilgrimage," 138.

of less fortunate Damascenes.[220] Unsurprisingly, most of the looms that used to function in Bāb Tūmā were burned during the 1860 violence.[221] It is also not a coincidence that there were no Christian weavers in the Maydān neighborhood, untouched during the violence of 1860.[222]

There were various conflicts among Christian and Muslim silk artisans in the period under scrutiny. Silk was a major economic stake, and foreign houses of commerce relied on their protégés. On the other hand, Muslim silk weavers used the *maǧlis* to protect their own interests and leverage the political influence of protégés. In 1843, there were in the city fourteen Muslim houses and forty-five Christian houses who produced Damask silk fabrics.[223]

Exemplifying these dynamics, the municipal council issued a decree in 1842, just after the Egyptian withdrawal from Syria, stating that Christians weavers could no longer produce a type of silk called the *Malkīyā*. The Christian weavers called upon the British consul to abrogate this decree. The Greek Catholic Ibrāhīm Mišāqa, who had arrived from Mount Lebanon to work in silk production in the city, also complained to the consulate because of this decree. He apparently benefited from the protection of the British consul.[224] Pressured by the consul, the *maǧlis* offered the compromise that Christians could work in the production of silk, but not own a loom of their own, rather they should work with Muslim masters. While consul eventually refused this offer, Muslims protested by closing their workshops, rendering numerous people unemployed. The consul thus turned to the chief of the *āṣnāf* and found an agreement in that Christians could work in this capacity but their looms should be located in

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[220] F.O., 78/1520, Brant- Bulwer, August 30th 1860; F.O., 195/601, Brant-Bulwer, August 25th 1860; *Aḥwāl al-naṣārā,* 28.
[221] Abdul Karim Rafeq,"The Impact of Europe on a Traditional Economy: The Case of Damascus, 1840-1870," in *Économie et Sociétés dans l'Empire Ottoman, fin du XVIIIe-début du XXe siècle : Actes du Colloque de Strasbourg, 1er-5 Juillet 1980*, ed. Jean-Louis Bacqué-Grammont and Paul Dumont (Paris: Éditions du Centre national de la recherche scientifique, 1983), 422; Beinin, *Workers and Peasants,* 49.
[222] Beinin, *Workers and Peasants,* 49.
[223] Societé Orientale de France, *Revue de l'Orient: Bulletin de la Société orientale*, Volume 2 (Paris: Delavigne, 1843), 185-186.
[224] His relative, Mīḫāʾīl Mišāqa, was linked to the British consulate, later on becoming the vice consul of the United governments of America.

the 'Turkish quarter', probably meaning in the Qaymayrīya the neighborhood specialized in textile production.[225] However, *āṣnāf* chiefs ultimately refused to let Ibrāhīm work in the *Malkīyā*, showing a letter stating that foreigners could not work in this capacity.[226] This answer points to the fact that *āṣnāf* leaders associated foreign protection with foreign status.

In 1846, the Christians manufacturers of silk were bothered again. Their Muslim competitors obtained form the *maǧlis* an ordinance forbidding them to weave a fabric called *alāǧā*[227] and cotton, arguing that weaver was a Muslim job. The French consular agent Tippel complained to the governor, which resulted in the consulate door being put on fire.[228] Some Muslim weavers also argued that it was a Muslim guild, while Christian weavers responded that imperial decrees abolished all types of monopolies.[229] Although monopolies had been abolished in 1838,[230] they were still enforced locally through pressure on the *maǧlis*. Indeed, orders to abolish monopolies were repeated over the 1840's, yet it seems that it was only in 1851 that this decision was effectively enforced.[231] When the governor remarked that Muslims did not pay a specific tax to undertake this work, pointing to the fact that it was not a monopoly, the Muslims weavers demanded to pay a tax to remain in control of the production. When the governor refused, the weavers closed their shop to protest and to turn their workers against Christian weavers. The *maǧlis* ultimately judged in favour of the Muslim weavers.[232] This conflict reveals that economic competition played a role in the confessionalization of society. It encouraged individuals to reinforce the societal borders between religious groups by restricting certain professions to Muslims or Christians. To be sure, in the previous centuries, certain guilds had indeed been dominated by members of a specific religious

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[225] F.O., 195/196, Wood-Canning, July 12th 1842.
[226] F.O., 195/196, Ahmad Pasha-Wood, July 12th 1842.

[227] Deluxe stripped material made of a combination of silk and cotton.
[228] A.E., 166/PO- Serie D/20, vol. 3, Tippel -Baron, December 19th 1846.
[229] Ibid.
[230] Khater. *Inventing Home,* 30.
[231] F.O., 195/368, Wood-Canning, March 12th 1851.
[232] Ibid.

community. In the 19th century however, with the abolition of the guilds, there were attempts to codify the religious identity of the profession through the use of the provincial *maǧlis.*

Certain neighborhood were more touched by these tensions, depending on the dominant commercial activity. Qaymayrīya[233] was the neighborhood of merchants and artisans, where weaving was conducted. It was the center of textile production.[234] The neighborhood was often involved in troubles and rebellions.[235] Among those who were hanged in 1860 for participating in the violence, many came from the Qaymayrīya.[236] It remained an area where inter-confessional tensions where high, even after the violence of 1860. In October 1860, a few months after the violence, crosses were again drawn on Christian houses of Qaymayrīya,[237] which led to a panic among Christians and encouraged their migration to Beirut.[238]

2.2 Money-lending

Money-lending could also lead to interpersonal conflicts which often gave rise to inter-confessional tensions. Christians and Jews under foreign protection opened money-changing establishments, which directly threatened the existing Muslim changing houses.[239] Protégés enjoyed the backing of consulates in their commercial affairs, which gave them some sort of leverage. When protégés as creditors insisted on the timely repayment of debts, it often gave rise to conflicts.[240] For example, in the winter of 1842, Ǧirǧis Maksūd, confronted one of his debtors, Ḥassan Ezzīya Kuldī, in front of foreign merchants and requested that he repays his debt of 100 piasters. Maksūd was officially a postmaster for the

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[233] See map in Annex 1.
[234] Okawara, "Urban Fabric," 173, 175.
[235] See for example neighborhood fights involving the Qaymayrīya BOA, MVL.186.115, September 22nd 1857; When the governor planned to start the conscription in 1850, he announced that it will start with the Qaymayrīya. After hearing the news, the merchants closed their shops and prepared for rebellion; A.E., 166/PO- Serie D/20, vol. 3, Valberg-French Ambassador in Istanbul, September 25th 1850.
[236] al-Usṭwānī, *Mašāhid,* 184.
[237] A.E., 67/CPC, vol. 5/6, Outrey-Thouvenel, October l6th 1860.
[238] A.E., 67/CPC, vol. 5/6, Outrey-Lavalette, October 29th 1860.
[239] A.E., 189/PO, vol. 9, Outrey-Thouvenel, March 7th 1856.
[240] F.O., 190/226, Timoni-Canning, December 4th 1845 and December 28th 1846; F.O., 195/601, Brant-Malmesbury, September 17th 1858.

British consulate but also a merchant who owned a shop located in Khan ʿUmud, one of the oldest khans of Damascus in the ʿAmāra neighbourhood.

His debtor, Hassan, is described in the consular archives as a merchant, however in the Ottoman archives he is mentioned as a military leader.[241] He was unhappy to be called upon for a debt repayment in public, and denied having any debt to settle. The argument deteriorated and turned into a physical fight. Hassan then left the scene of the fight only to come back soon accompanied by soldiers and the chief of police, the *tüfekcibaşı*, to arrest Maksūd.[242] In order to get the support of the police, Hassan accused Maksūd of blasphemy, which enraged the crowds in the vicinity of the khan. The crowd encouraged the soldiers to arrest Maksūd. Blasphemy was a severely punished crime and as part of the repertoire of inter-confessional tensions, it was often used as a tool of delegitimization in disputes.[243] The guards of the British consulate were sent to the spot immediately to help Maksūd and fought with the soldiers of the *tüfekcibaşı*. They eventually managed to bring Maksūd to the British consulate.

When the public uproar around this affair had finally died down, Maksūd, thinking that order had now been restored, decided to leave the consulate. He was mistaken because the *tüfekcibaşı* immediately arrested him. The chancellor of the British consulate, Mr. Timoni, was dispatched to Halit Paşa, the chief brigadier, to obtain his release. The chancellor claimed that Maksūd's arrest was illegal because of his protection status. Timoni however was not successful in his mission and even entered into a physical fight with the brigadier. The British consul, outraged at this behaviour, sent an angry letter to the governor Necip Paşa, demanding the exemplary punishment of the merchant Hassan. Yet Necip Paşa contested the version of the story presented by Maksūd and accused him of blasphemy. He also reprimanded the

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[241] BOA, HR.SFR.3.2.41, August 26th 1842.
[242] F.O., 195/196, Wood-Canning. February 20th 1842.
[243] In 1843 a similar interpersonal conflict caused inter-confessional tensions as a Jewish man was accused of blasphemy, F.O., 195/226, Wood-Canning, December 13th 1843.

guards of the French consulate for drawing their swords on the government's soldiers. In a report crafted to the Ottoman government, both the blasphemy and the attack of the guards was put forward, while the reason of the dispute was not mentioned.[244] Necip Paşa found the behaviour and attitude of foreign consuls, and especially the British ones, to be unacceptable. He crafted a petition to the sultan, which he encouraged Muslim notables to sign. In the petition, he demanded the removal of all consular agents in the city, denouncing the acts of aggression on the part of the guards of the consulates.[245]

This affair occurred at a delicate moment in Damascene history. The Ottoman government had recently recovered *Bilād al-Šām* from the hands of the Egyptians. The time was ripe for the expression of resentment towards Christians, seen as the favorites of the Egyptian regime. The notables of the *maǧlis* attempted to re-impose clothing restrictions on non-Muslims that the Egyptians had lifted and forbade them from riding horses, in the hope of restoring the former hierarchies and the status quo which favoured them.[246] In this period, inter-personal conflicts became intertwined with questions regarding hierarchy, political power, access and privilege. These conflicts involving protégés often led to popular uproar against foreigners and their influence.[247]

In the mid-19th century, various interpersonal conflicts involving Ottoman Christians or foreigners turned into public events of inter-confessional conflict. These interpersonal conflicts could have been resolved by the traditional negotiation and accommodation between traditional intermediaries and government officials. Conflicts in trade were previously resolved through the intervention of the guilds representatives among others. Due to the abolition of the guild system, these intermediaries could no longer diffuse social conflict. On the contrary, the intervention of consuls politicized and gave publicity to these interpersonal

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[244] BOA, HR.SFR.3.2.41, August 26th 1842.
[245] F.O., 195/196, Wood-Canning, February 20th 1842.
[246] A.E., 67/CPC, vol. 1/2, Ratti-Menton-Guizot, January 6th 1841.
[247] F.O., 195/226, Wood-Canning, December 13th 1843.

conflicts. They used these conflicts to put pressure on the government to introduce desired reforms. These conflicts were taken as proofs of the dysfunctional aspect of the existing system and of the lack of open-mindedness and corruption of local inhabitants and government officials. Consuls also wished to show to their own foreign minister the precarious situation in which they were working in order to ask for more funds, employees or rewards. They were thus encouraged to worsen conflicts and make them public. On the other hand, governors also had an incentive to give publicity to these conflicts and to the role of foreign consuls in order to show Istanbul their loyalty and to prove their resistance against foreign encroachment in the empire. The strategies of foreign consuls and governors coincided in polarizing the public sphere and politicizing religious identities.

3. Competition for the Control of Rural Resources

Foreign protection and the privileges associated with it were a source of inter-confessional conflicts and resentment in trade. It also played an important role in land ownership and tax-farming, two domains which were transformed by the Ottoman *Tanzimat* reforms. It built on the long term development of the shift in the balance of power between Christians, Druze and Shias in Mount Lebanon, the Anti-Lebanon and the Biqā'.[248]

3.1 Power Dynamics of the 18th century

In Mount Lebanon, the rule of Bašīr II Šihāb from 1790 to 1840 allowed Maronites to challenge Druze leadership. Bašīr II Šihāb gained considerable power, pushed away the Druzes from the region, and gave predominance to the Maronites over tax-farming. At that point some of the Šihāb emirs converted to Christianity.[249] In Wādī al Taym, under the

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[248] Farah, *The Politics of Interventionism*, 14; Slim, *The Greek Orthodox Waqf*, 99.

[249] Samir Khalaf, *Civil and Uncivil Violence in Lebanon, A History of the Internationalization of a Communal Conflict,* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002), 71; William Harris, *Lebanon: A History, 600–2011* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 104.

leadership of Emir Bašīr II, tax farms were increasingly given to Christians instead of Druze.[250]

Similar dynamics took place in the Biqāʿ, which is situated between Mount Lebanon and the Anti-Lebanon mountains. The two main cities of the Biqāʿ were Zaḥle and Baalbek. The Biqāʿ had various *āwqāf*, agricultural lands and was considered as the granary of Damascus. The region was cultivated by peasants and run by tax farmers, paramilitary leaders, and governors of the neighboring cities. The domination of these countryside areas played a large role in Damascene politics.[251] Zaḥle was a Christian stronghold in the region populated mainly by Greek Catholics. Baalbek was under the authority of the Shia Ḥarfūš family.[252] It was at the cross road of a triangular relationship, between the Druze, the Shia Ḥarfūš and the Christians. In the Biqāʿ, Shias such as the Ḥarfūš were traditionally the land owners and tax-farmers and Christians peasants rented the land for cultivation. The Ḥarfūš family had been awarded the tax-farm of the *sanjak* of Homs since the Ottoman conquest.[253]

However, from the 18th century, Zaḥle's commercial success started to overshadow Baalbek, leading to the migration of many inhabitants to the new commercial center.[254] Zahliotes increasingly entered into tax-farming and owned land in the Biqāʿ.[255] The increasing grain production of the region and the integration of the region into the world economy increased the value of these lands, pushing the government to bring it under its direct rule. The governors plot the Ḥarfūš against the Šihāb emirs to obtain the control of the Biqāʿ.[256] These attempts at centralization caused resistance from the part of these

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[250] For instance, he gave the tax farm of Rāšayā and Ḥāṣbayā to his secretary Mīḫāʾīl Mišāqa; Slim, *Métayage,* 129; Slim, *The Greek Orthodox Waqf,* 99.
[251] Harris, *Lebanon,* 111.
[252] Chahine, *C'etait Zahlé, 16.*
[253] Ibid, 31.
[254] Stefan Winter, *The Shiites of Lebanon under Ottoman Rule, 1516-1788* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 166.
[255] Haris, *Lebanon,* 111; Abdul-Rahim Abu-Husayn, *The View from Istanbul: Lebanon and the Druze Emirate in the Ottoman Chancery Documents, 1546–1711* (New York: I. B. Taurus, 2004), 124.
[256] Haris, *Lebanon,* 111.

intermediaries who had held power for decades if not centuries and had built strong mutual relationships and links of reciprocity and loyalty with the local population.

In the end of the 18th century, the governor Ahmed al-Cezzar dealt a blow to the Ḥarfūš leadership of Baalbek. The Emir Bašīr II Šihāb managed by 1788 to bring the Biqā' under his authority. Zaḥle Christian inhabitants benefited from the temporary downfall of the Ḥarfūš, they obtained properties in the Biqā' thanks to their activities in commerce but also in money-lending.[257] Greek Catholic merchants of Damascus also purchased houses in Zaḥle and land in the Biqā'.[258] There were thus similar changes in the balance of power in favor of Christians in the surroundings of Damascus in the end of the 18th century and beginning of the 19th century.

3.2 Egyptian Rule : Shift in the Balance of Power

The Egyptian rule built on these earlier dynamics and because of alliance strategies favored the economic activities of Christians in the countryside at the expense of Druze. Under the Egyptians, the Emir Bašīr was rid of his competitors such as the Druze Ǧunblāṭ emirs who were sent to Acre and executed by order of Muḥammad ʿAlī. He took over their responsibilities in the Šūf and in the Western Biqā'.[259] In Wādī al-Taym, and especially in Ḥāṣbayā and Rāšayā, Druzes were sent into exile and their Christian tenants tried to register their land under their own names.[260] The Druze tax-farmers who fled to the Ḥawrān or were sent into exile during the Egyptian rule saw their responsibilities slowly overtaken by the Maronite clergy close to the Emir Bašīr.[261] In Dayr al-Qamar in the Šūf, the Druzes Ābū Naqab shaykhs used to have the control of the city and collected taxes on the area. However, they were sent into exile by the Egyptians and lost their privileges, which were taken over by

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[257] Abkāriyūs, *Kitāb Nawādir,* 53.
[258] Chahine, *C'était Zahle*, 34.
[259] Ibid, 10.
[260] Šāhīn, *Ḥaṣr al-Liṯām,* 125-126; Farah, *Politics of Interventionism,* 10, 14, 56.
[261] Ibid, 11.

Christians.[262] It was part of a larger policy of centralization of tax-farms by Ibrāhīm ʿAlī. First of all, he sent many tax-farmers into exile, replacing them with his own functionaries.[263] Then, he exercised a more direct role into the collection of revenue.[264] *Āşrāf*, who had played a large role in tax-farming, were especially targeted by this centralization of taxation.[265]

When the Egyptians departed, this situation was ripe for conflict.[266] The British consul supported the revolt against the Egyptians. To win the hearts of the mountaineers against the Egyptian regime, the British and Ottoman representatives promised Druze a recovery of all their former privileges.[267] The British consul Wood won Ḫanǧar Ḫarfūš 's loyalty against the Egyptians by promising him the rule of Baalbek.[268] Yet, in various cases, it turned out to be empty promises, for Christians refused to relinquish their rights over land and tax-farms.[269] These conflicts over land ownership and tax-farming explain the participation of these various Druze leaders in the attack against Christians during the summer of 1860.

3.3 Tax-farming

During the Egyptian rule, *āġāwāt* and notables also benefited from the transformations of land ownership at the expense of the ulema who used to own land beforehand.[270] Foreigners and their protégés entered in the competition and endeavored to obtain the same access to property but also to play a role in tax-collection, money-lending and in the booming grain trade.[271] These activities were related, for money-lenders used to give a loan to a village

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[262] Ibid, 64.
[263] Slim, *Le Métayage,* 129.
[264] Charles Issawi, *The Fertile Crescent 1800–1914: a documentary economic history.* Studies in Middle Eastern History(New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press 1988), 416.
[265] Naʿīsa, *Muǧtama,* 453.
[266] Ibid, 14.
[267] Makdisi, *Culture of Sectarianism*, 59.
[268] A.E., 166/PO-Serie D/20, vol. 4, Edmond de Barrere- French Ambassador in Istanbul, January 29th 1854.
[269] Ibid, 44, 64.
[270] James A. Reilly, "Status Groups and Propertyholding in the Damascus Hinterland, 1828-80," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 21 (1989): 521.
[271] F.O., 195/601, Brant-Alison, June 29th 1858; Abdul-Karim Rafeq mentions that Christians increasingly sought to purchase property in the first part of the 19th century and that they were in fourth position for land purchases in the Maydān in 1834-1835 Abdul-Karim Rafeq, "The social and economic structure of Bab

with high interest rates with land, produce or real estate as collateral. If peasants were not be able to repay in time, the arrears would add up until they reached the value of the village. The village and its arable land would then be taken as repayment in kind of the original loan. Tax collecting, money lending and land acquisition were thus intimately related activities that were highly profitable, especially in the 19th century with the booming grain trade and exports to Europe.[272] It led to a strong competition between non-Muslims under foreign protection and Muslim *āġāwāt*, notables, *āšrāf*, and ulema, who had dominated this economic sector beforehand. In this competition, protégés benefited from an advantage as they had access to European funds.[273] To obtain tax-farms, protégés did not hesitate to make the consuls intervene to either delegitimize their opponents, or to obtain the removal of sub-governors who countered their commercial ventures by accusing them of corruption.[274]

Foreigners and protégés increasingly purchased tax-farms, which created conflicts with former intermediaries such as the Ḥarfūš.[275] For example, in exchange for his support in the uprising against the Egyptians, the Ottoman government had promised the British consul's protégés tax-farms in the Biqā', the Ḥawrān, and Baalbek. At the departure of the Egyptians, these tax-farms were not auctioned, their price was fixed and given to British subjects. These tax-farms remained fixed until 1857.[276] The rest of the tax-farms were sold again at auction, which was quite detrimental to peasants. As funds became more and more available through foreign loans, the bids on tax-farming accordingly increased to unprecedented levels, thus increasing the taxation burden on peasants.[277] According to the British consul Wood, in 1850

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al-Musalla (al-Midan), Damascus, 1825-1875," in *Arab Civilization: Challenges and Responses*, dir. Georges N. Atiyeh and Ibrahim M. Oweiss (New York: Suny Press, 1988): 286, 294 ; Reilly, "Status Groups", 525.

[272] Isabel Burton, *The Inner Life of Syria, Palestine and the Holy Land, from my Private Journal,* (London: Henry S. King, 1875), 332.

[273] See the activities of Ḥanā Frayǧ in A.E., 18/PO- Serie A, vol. 9, Outrey-Thouvenel, March 7th 1856, A.E., 18/PO- Serie A, vol.3, Devoize-de Lemont, October 12th 1843; F.O., 195/601, Brant- Alison, June 29th 1858; F.O., 195/458, Misk-Redcliffe, January 28th 1857; BOA, HR.MKT.3.58.March 22nd 1844

[274] A.E.., 195/291, Calvert-Canning, September 28th 1850.

[275] A.E., 18/PO - Serie A, vol. 9, Outrey-Thouvenel, November 15th 1856.

[276] A.E., 18/PO- Serie A, vol. 9, Outrey-Thouvenel, November 15th 1856.

[277] F.O., 195/368, Wood-Canning, November 17th 1850.

peasants had to pay from 43% to 60% of their revenue as tax. They were no longer able to pay their taxes and arrears were accumulating, making it harder to pay every year.[278] Damascene notables and *āġāwāt* maintained a strong grip on the areas around Damascus and on the tax farms in the main cities.[279] However, the tax-farms of the Ḥawrān and Biqāʿ were later given to the Greek Catholic Baḥrī family.[280]

Governors attempted to counter the increasing involvement of foreigners and protégés in tax-farming by taking a variety of measures. In 1848, the governor forbade Europeans to make cash advances to peasants for their produce. The funds already given to peasants should be reimbursed in installments over four years. Then, he declared that all cases involving foreigners and Ottoman subjects would be judged by the *maǧlis*.[281] Finally, he sent a circular to the consuls informing them that any transaction had to be made on an official paper bought from the government to be valid. All other types of informal transactions were deemed invalid.[282] In this reform, we see an effort at bureaucratizing transactions between foreigners and Ottoman subjects probably to address the conflicts arising from contested purchases, loans and commercial transactions, frequent in this period.

Damascene notables, ulema, and *āšrāf* also attempted to diminish the tax-farming activities of foreign protégés by using the *maǧlis*. They repeatedly frustrated the commercial ventures of foreigners and protégés, by delaying repayment of debts. In 1845, when peasants from a village called ʿAdlīyā declared that they could not repay their debts to British protégés, some *maǧlis* members, also involved in tax-farming, refused to force the peasants to honor their debts in order to frustrate the protégés' interests.[283] The *maǧlis* grew worried about the

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[278] F.O., 195/391 Memorandum Wood, October 3rd 1850.
[279] A.E., 166/PO-Serie D/20, vol. 3, Tippel-Bourqueney, January 20th 1846; In 1845, the Biqāʿ was tax-farmed to an *āġā* called Maymūr. In 1847, someone called Abū Ḥamzā won all the tax farm of Damascus in two consecutive years, A.E., 166/PO-Serie D/20, vol. 3, Beaudin-Bourqueney, April 24th 1847; A.E., 166/PO-Serie D/20, vol. 3, Beaudin- Bourqueney, April 24th 1847.
[280] A.E., 166/PO-Serie D/20, vol. 3, Lalberg- French Minister in Istanbul, March 27th 1850.
[281] F.O., 195/291, Wood-Canning, November 24th 1848.
[282] F.O., 195/291, Osman Pasha-Wood, October 20th 1848.
[283] F.O., 195/226, David Harari-Consulate, December 4th 1845.

fact that an increasing amount of villages in Baalbek were sub-tax-farmed from the Ḥarfūš emirs by British dragomans.[284] The *maǧlis* thus decided in 1846 to add a clause to the tax-farming contracts stating that the contract could not be sub-lent to Europeans or Druzes under British protection.[285] Indeed, as foreigners were excluded from tax-farming, they would usually sub-lend a district from a recognized tax-farmer. They could also simply pay the tax of a certain village and then receive a percentage of the crop afterwards, and sell them at their convenience. The *maǧlis* repeated attempts at countering the increasing economic power of Christian and Jewish protégés in these economic domains were read by the consuls through sectarian narratives. They saw these measures as the consequence of their 'fanatic' ill-dispositions towards non-Muslims, rather than as a consequence of economic competition.[286]

In 1857, the *defterdar*[287] attempted again to exclude foreigners from tax-farming, favoring instead government employees, although they were not supposed to be involved in this activity.[288] He even put to auction the tax-farms that had been given to foreigners in Baalbek, Ḥawrān and the Biqā' after the return of the Ottoman government in 1842. The auctioning of these lands thus created discontent among the peasants as it would inevitably include a raise in tax. It also outraged foreigners who had been involved in this profitable region.[289]

3.4 Land-ownership

In addition to tax-farming, foreigners and protégés also increasingly purchased lands. *Qāḍī* court registers indicate that protégés purchased land and properties in the countryside of

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[284] On the Ḥarfūš family see Stefan Winter, *The Shiites of Lebanon.*
[285] A.E., 166/PO-Serie D/20, vol. 3, Tippel-Bourqueney, January 20th 1846.
[286] See for example A.E. CPC/Turquie/Damas, Ratti-Menton-Guizot, 25 novembre 1841.
[287] Treasurer of the governor.
[288] F.O., 195/458, Misk-Redcliffe, January 4th 1857.
[289] F.O., 195/196, Misk- Redcliffe, January 28th 1857 and F.O., 195/458, Misk-Redcliffe, April 23rd 1857.

the city of Damascus in an unprecedented manner in the mid 19th century.[290] Similar to Muslim elites, they used the control over rural resources to gain and retain power in the city. In this competition, foreigners and their protégés benefited from the tax advantage given to them by the capitulations but also the political leverage of the consuls. However, the access of foreigners to land was very controversial; it was officially legalized only in 1867, yet it is clear that foreigners, consuls and foreign religious establishments did buy land beforehand.[291] Consuls themselves engaged into the competition over land. They often used the name of protégés to purchase land.[292] For example, the British consul Wood bought large tracts of land.[293] In Damascus, foreign consuls or consular agents at times entered into open conflict with each other regarding their respective land and tax-farm delimitation. These conflicts often involved their Ottoman employees and ended up creating resentments against foreigners and their protégés.[294] Some consuls were quite critical of the attempts of foreigners or protégés to acquire land through money-lending and their instrumentalization of consuls for personal gains.[295]

As protégés and consuls increasingly turned to land purchases as means of influence, the governors started to worry. Foreign ownership of land in Syria seems to have already been a concern for the central government at the end of the 18th century when the governor al-Cezzar was ordered not to let foreigners buy land.[296] At that time, the consuls' *berats*

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[290] The Damascene court records (siccil) mentions many purshases from the Frayğ and Šāmī families, see for example Islam Araştırmaları Merkezi, Istanbul, Turkiye Harici sicciler, Dimaşk, vol. 516, 1859-1861, no.42.

[291] A.E., 189/PO, vol. 10, Outrey-Thouvenel, January 10th 1860; Ulrike Freitag, "The City and the Stranger," 222; A.E., 18/PO- Serie A, vol. 9, Outrey-Thouvenel, January 12th 1857.

[292] The consuls often entered into conflict with each other over their respective lands, BOA, HR.MKT.178.16 February 18th 1857; A.E., 18/PO/A, vol. 9, Outrey-Thouvenel, January 12th 1857; The British consul Richard Wood was especially active in land purchases, see A.E., 166/PO- Serie D/20, vol. 3, Barbet de Jouy-Lavalette, September 9th 1852.

[293] A.E., 166/PO-Serie D/20, vol. 3, Barbet de Jouy-Lavalette, September 9th 1852.

[294] F.O., 195/601, Brant-Bulwer, October 20th 1860; F.O., 195/458, Misk-Redcliffe, January 4th 1857; A.E., 18/PO- Serie A, vol. 9, Outrey- Thouvenel, January 12th 1857, also see in the Ottoman archive on this subject : BOA, HR.MKT.178.16, January 19th 1857.

[295] Burton, *The Inner Life of Syria*, 336.

[296] BOA, C.HR.159.7926, November 13th 1792.

started to mention the interdiction to buy or possess land.[297] This concern was amplified in

the 19th century with the development of foreign imperial projects. The control of land by

foreigners was commonly seen as the first step towards conquest and foreign domination,

which some Damascenes thought were imminent.[298]

Conflicts regarding the legalization of land acquisition for foreigners were common

and the local elite attempted to prevent foreigners from acquiring lands in the empire, which

they themselves were coveting. Even after the authorization to buy land in 1867, the fact that

the French consul and some foreigners bought very large plots of land around Hama at a very

cheap price caused the *qāḍī* Muḥammad Saʿid al Usṭwānī to resign because of his opposition

to the governor Muhammad Reşid Paşa who had authorized such a transaction.[299]

Faced with foreign ownership of land, the members of the *maǧlis,* themselves

landowners, tried to counter the expansion of the economic activities of protégés and

foreigners in the countryside of the city by attempting to exclude them legally from

landownership.[300] For example in 1835 and 1847, the *maǧlis* of Aleppo forbade Christians to

buy property in Aleppo, probably in order to prevent foreigners to buy it through their

intermediary. The Greek Catholic patriarch Maksīmūs Maẓlūm complained in 1847 about this

interdiction and argued that it gave the population the impression that Christians were no

longer Ottoman subjects but were actually treated as foreigners.[301] In the same period, the

members of the *maǧlis* of Damascus attempted to prevent Christians and Jews from sitting on

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[297] Boogert, *The Capitulations*, 26.
[298] Rumors reported in: A.E. 67/CPC, vol. 5/6, Outrey-Walewski, September 27th 1858; A.E. 67/CPC, vol. 5/6, Outrey-Walewski, October 24th 1858; A.E. CPC/ vol. 7/8, Outrey-Thouvenel, July 28th 1860; See also Anonymous, *Les Massacres du Mont Liban 1860 : souvenirs de Syrie par un témoin oculaire (*Paris, Asmar, 2007), 112-117; An example is particularly telling, when the project of building a road from Beirut to Damascus was made public, it was perceived locally as a way to facilitate foreign invasion of the hinterland: A.E., Nantes, 18/PO/A, vol. 9, Outrey-Thouvenel, September 22nd 1858; BOA, A.MKT.UM.460.100, March 10th 1861; Šahin, *Ḥaṣr al-Liṯām,* 129.
[299] al-Usṭwānī, *Mašāhid,* 51.
[300] . BOA, A.DVN.21.12, February 23rd 1847; FO, 195/196, Wood-Canning, July 12th 1842 ; A.E., CCC/98-3, De Ségur-Drouyn de Lhuys, April 11th 1849; A.E., CCC/98-1, Ratti-Menton-Soult, December 28th 1839.
[301] BOA, A.DVN.21.12 February 23rd 1847.

the *maǧlis*.[302] Actions that were described by the consuls as against Christians were actually a strategy within an economical and political competition. It was caused by the consideration that there were limited resources and no possibility of shared benefits, thus creating a zero-sum game. These strategies however ended up comforting the idea that Christians were not fully Ottoman subjects.

When a tax on property, the *vergi*, was imposed in 1843, the question of the financial responsibilities of Ottoman protégés became a major point of contention between foreign powers and the governor.[303] Were protégés supposed to pay the tax on property even if they were exempted from taxation? The Ottoman government had to define more clearly the border between foreigner and Ottoman subject. In 1843, the governor Necip Paşa was quite aware that the Christians and Jewish elites were rushing toward protection to avoid the property tax. He requested that even protégés pay the *vergi* tax, for it was a property tax and was applicable to all Ottoman subjects, including protégés.[304] The consuls, on the other hand, insisted that protégés be exempted from it, for they considered that it was a personal tax and therefore included in the fiscal exemptions listed in the capitulations.[305] This assertion was not completely misled, for although the *vergi* was imposed on three classes, rich, middle and poor, it was still collected as a fixed sum by head. For this tax to become a real property tax it would require a census of individual property, but there was no real assessment of property or wealth until the 1850's.[306] The Ottoman government was quite careful not to rush into a wealth census for it had caused the death of the governor Salim Paşa decades earlier and had precipitated the conquest of the region by the Egyptians.[307]

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[302] F.O., 195/291, Wood-Canning, December 19th 1848.
[303] F.O. 195/226, Aly Pasha-Wood, March 27th 1846.
[304] F.O., 190/226, Wood-Canning, April 8th 1846.
[305] F.O., 195/291, Wood-Osman Pasha, February 24th 1849.
[306] F.O., 195/368, Wood-Canning, April 27th 1852.
[307] Mishāqah, *Murder, Mayhem*, 165.

The governor, faced with the refusal to pay taxes, took various measures to control the acquisition of protection. In 1844, he asked that consuls present an up-to-date list of their protégés.[308] The consuls were rather reluctant to do so, and Christian notables threatened the French consul not to publish this list.[309] Later on, the governors asked to see the passports of those who claimed foreign nationality, yet the consuls resisted.[310] The consuls were worried that by allowing the governor to inspect their documents, they would be setting a precedent. They saw the attribution of protection as a right associated with their function, and refused to let the Ottoman government control their internal procedures.[311] When the French consul received a vizirial letter in 1849 which demanded that protégés obtain an identification card from the governor, he refused for he feared that protégés would see themselves as sent by the governor, and thus indirectly employed by him, and would therefore become unreliable.[312] There was a similar concern for loyalty among local notables as well. For example, members of the Damascene *maǧlis* also justified their expulsion of Christians and Jews from this institutions by accusing them of working as spies for foreign consuls.[313] The position of protégé, embedded in two political frameworks, was seen with suspicion on both sides. The British consul complained that when the *maǧlis* members and the governors discussed publicly the issue of protégés' taxation, they made it seem as if protégés were rebelling against the government, without mentioning the underlying reasons of their refusal. It thus gave a bad image of protégés as disregarding Ottoman authority.[314]

In 1845, the governor of Damascus, fed up with the actions of the consuls, presented the local Christians and Jews with an ultimatum. They had three months to define their status

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[308] F.O., 195/196, Wood-Canning, May 17th 1844.
[309] A.E., 166/PO-Serie D/20, vol. 3, de Bourville-Bourqueney, December 11th 1847.
[310] BOA, HR.MKT. 19.60, March 24th 1848.
[311] F.O., 195/196, Wood-Canning, December 1st 1848.
[312] A.E., 67/ CPC,vol. 3, Garnier- de Lhuys, April 1st 1849.
[313] F.O., 195/291, Wood-Canning, February 13th 1849.
[314] F.O., 195/ 291, Wood-Osman Nuri Paşa, July 16th 1849.

and position as either foreigners or Ottoman subjects. [315] If the protégés did not pay the *vergi*, they would not be considered as Ottoman subjects, but rather foreign *musta'mīn*.[316] They could therefore not own land in the empire, which was officially forbidden for non-Ottoman subjects until 1867. In this case they had to sell their real estate and properties.[317] This ultimatum requiring Christians and Jews to choose between *ḏimmī* and *musta'mīn* status was repeatedly put forth throughout the 19th century and always met with resistance from the foreign consuls thereby undermining its success. Rather than being actual threats, these ultimatums should be considered as negotiation tools, as a mean to make foreign protection less attractive by getting rid of the middle position between foreigner and Ottoman subject.

In conclusion, in the 19th century, the economic domains of textile trade, land-ownership and tax-farming underlined by a strong competition, increasingly defined along religious lines. It contributed to the confessionalization of Ottoman society. The introduction of foreign protection, coupled with the *Tanzimat* reforms, changed the rule of access to resources. The various advantages foreign protection attributed to protégés created opportunities for alliances across religious borders but was also a major cause of conflict and resentments between economic actors. With the transformation of urban governance in the *Tanzimat* reforms, traditional intermediaries could no longer diffuse tensions. As protégés used foreign consuls to secure their rights, the Muslim notables relied on the *maǧlis* to counter the land purchases of foreigners through restricting the economic role of Ottoman subjects under foreign protection. It led to the increasing involvement of the Ottoman governors and foreign consuls in these interpersonal conflicts, which turned them into diplomatic issues. It also contributed to the politicization of religious identities. These various conflicting claims over land played a role in the inter-confessional violence of 1860 in Damascus and the

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[315] F.O.,78/660, Wood-Aberdeen, April 8th 1846.
[316] Foreigners granted the sultan's protection under the capitulations.
[317] F.O., 195/291, Wood-Cowley, March 5th 1848,

countryside. Foreign protection was subject to lengthy negotiations between the Ottoman government and foreign consuls. As the Ottoman government increasingly attempted to regulate this status, it led to the identification of protégés as others against which Ottoman citizenship was defined.

CHAPTER 8: THE ISSUE OF THE CALENDAR: INTRA-CONFESSIONAL TENSIONS AND VIOLENCE IN THE GREEK CATHOLIC COMMUNITY

Inter-confessional relations are often approached from an inter-group perspective. Accounts of inter-confessional violence in particular tend to speak of communities as actors or victims of aggression. This is as true today as it was in the 19th century Ottoman Empire. Arabic chronicles mention 'Islam's' aggression against *al-Naṣārā[1]* when speaking of the attack against the Christians quarter in 1860.[2] This interpretation grid was also favored by foreign representatives.[3] In these descriptions where individual or subgroups' actions are taken as representatives of the larger religious groups, obliterating differences, divisions and various political and economic trajectories among these groups, only larger entities of Muslims and Christians remain.

When discussing inter-confessional relations in the Ottoman Empire, we are tempted to focus on the power imbalance between what is perceived as the majority, Muslims, and what is perceived as the minorities, Christians and Jews. These categories are however quite recent and were born with the development of representative institutions in the end of the 19th century.[4] The dichotomy majority/minority can confuse our understanding of inter-confessional relations in the first part of the 19th century. Indeed, this analysis ignores the importance of class, locality, family networks and patronage links in defining in-groups and out-groups in the Ottoman period. While Muslims did feel a sense of commonality with

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[1] Christians.
[2] *Aḥwāl al-naṣārā, 5, 30;* al-Usṭwānī, *Mašāhid,* 152; *Kitāb al-āḥzān,* 18-21.
[3] A.E, 166/PO-Serie D/20, vol. 5, Outrey-Lallemand, February 14th 1859; Makdisi, *Culture of Sectarianism*, 7.
[4] Benjamin Thomas White, *The Emergence of Minorities in the Middle East: The Politics of Community in French Mandate Syria* (George Square, Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2011), 209.

the Ottoman State because of their religious identification, they did not all feel part of the ruling class. In the same manner, Christians and Jews could feel part of the ruling class without identifying with the state on religious grounds. Social and economic distinctions divided religious communities and caused internal tensions.[5]

The shifts in the balance of power between and amongst non-Muslim communities was an important dynamic which punctuated daily life in the Ottoman Empire. This balance of power was further transformed by the *Tanzimat* reforms and foreign intervention. Communities were given new tools in conflict for resources and access, which created new divisions in their realms. These observations point to the need to reconsider the widespread notion that inter-confessional relations are only a question of interactions between well-defined religious groups.[6] We will see that they were shaped by internal divisions and power struggles.

This chapter will highlight these developments by focusing on a specific conflict which divided the Greek Catholic community in the first part of the 19th century, the shift from the Julian to the Gregorian calendar. The conflicts regarding this change led to violence and even threatened to cause a new schism within the Church. It also caused a crisis of clerical authority and raised the question of identity and authenticity of the Greek Catholic Church in the age of modernization and internationalization. These disputes reveal the interaction of ideological and ecclesiastical disputes with factionalism which informed strategies of power and shaped the specific forms of the modernization of the Church. These conflicts eventually played a role in the violence of 1860.

The affair of the calendar called for the involvement of foreign powers, apostolic delegates and Ottoman officials into the internal affairs of the Church on an unprecedented

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[5] Makdisi, *Culture of Sectarianism*, 36.
[6] Ibid, 6, 7; Recent works on inter-confessional relations pay attention to this aspect, see for example Katsumi Fukasawa, Benjamin J. Kaplan and Pierre-Yves Beaurepaire, eds., *Religious Interactions in Europe and the Mediterranean World* (London: Routledge, 2017).

level. Greek Catholics were asked to define their political belonging and their loyalty and to chose between their various patrons, moving away from the system of overlapping loyalties which had existed beforehand.

This chapter will delve into the issue of the calendar by analyzing how internal conflicts of the Greek Catholics were intertwined with notions of sovereignty, political loyalty and identification dynamics. First, we will explore the opposition of notables and parts of the clergy to the adoption of the Gregorian calendar. Then, we will see how the issue of the calendar brought to light conflicting conceptions of freedom and popular will. Finally, we will look at the politicization of this conflict by the intervention of various foreign and local actors.

1. Issue of the Calendar: Defining the Identity of the Greek Catholic Church in a Time of Factionalism

1.1 Notables and Bishops against the Calendar

The issue of the calendar took place during the patriarchate of Maẓlūm's successor Āklīmintūs Baḫūt̲. It reinforced the factionalism which had already appeared under Maẓlūm. All the institutions of the Church were divided on this subject which touched upon the core identity of the Greek Catholic Church oscillating between the east and the west.

Maẓlūm died in 1855 and the Holy See was worried that a bishop from the protégés of Maẓlūm would be elected and carry on with this conflictual relationship with Rome by insisting on an autonomous decision-making process. Āklīmintūs Baḫūt̲, the former bishop of Acre and a Salvatorian was elected patriarch in 1856, with to the help of the apostolic delegate.[7] Contrary to Maẓlūm, he did not have any links to the secular clergy and was

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[7] *S.C.P.F, (S.C) Greci Melchiti,* vol. 24, p. 150, Secret note, November 1855.
Ṭīyūdūsīyūs Kuyūmğī , as a procurator. Ṭīyūdūsīyūs Kuyūmğī was the brother of the Salvatorian procurator in Rome. They were both opponents to Maẓlūm.

concerned primarily with his religious order.[8] The bishops close to Maẓlūm were disappointed by this election and by the role played by the apostolic delegate. The new patriarch was in their eyes too subservient to the apostolic delegate and not enough concerned with protecting the rights of the Oriental patriarchs vis à vis Roman interventionism.[9] They took advantage of a dispute which arose regarding the required profession of faith when the patriarch was given the pallium from Rome to show their opposition to the election of Baḥūṯ.[10]

In this context of factionalism, the new patriarch Āklīmintūs Baḥūṯ decided to impose the change of calendar from Julian to Gregorian, according to Roman will. Rome had already asked the previous patriarch Maẓlūm to change the calendar but he had avoided taking this risky step.[11] The change of calendar which would have completely changed the dates of the holy days of Greek Catholics, which would have prevented them from celebrating and fasting with other local Christians, depriving them of this important moment of sociability. Indeed, Maronites were the only Christians of the region who had adopted the Gregorian calendar, representing the Latin rite. Adopting the Gregorian calendar was also seen as a step closer to adopting the Latin rite and as betraying the Greek rite and the specific identity of the Greek Catholic Church. Finally, the adoption of the calendar was perceived by many as surrendering to Roman will and weakening the prerogatives of the oriental patriarchs.[12]

Patriarch Baḥūṯ discussed the change of calendar with the bishops and the apostolic delegate. Some of them refused to apply it, claiming that their population was not ready for the change. They found a common ground by allowing the bishops whose population was favorable to the new calendar to change it, while others would be given more time to convince

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[8] Ibid, vol. 24, p. 2, Delegazione apostolica in Sira, Paolo Archbishop of Jaran- Cardinal Barnabo, October 1856.
[9] Ibid, vol. 24, p. 541, Paolo Archbishop of Taran and Apostolic vicar, December 20th 1856.
[10] Ibid.
[11] Verdeil, *La mission jésuite*, 60.
[12] *S.C.P.F, (S.C) Greci Melchiti,* vol. 24, p. 652, Letter of Agabios, April 20th 1857.

their flock. However, not long after, the patriarch made an announcement in the cathedral declaring that the change was to be imposed on all. Some Damascenes and Beirutis, among others, rebelled against this order, which made Baḥūt recall it. However, the French consul of Damascus intervened in favor of the patriarch and obtained a petition from some Damascene notables demanding to apply the change. Baḥūt, strong of the French consul's support, again declared the change of calendar during the mass.[13]

Among the notables, those who refused to change the calendar protested and asked to be able to do the mass in their own houses according to the old calendar. When it was denied, the notables were irritated and argued that they had built the churches with their own funds and could thus decide which rite to follow. Since the calendar was not a question of dogma, in their eyes it was not important to apply it.[14] They claimed that they defended the right to keep their customs and habits.[15] These discourses highlight the notion of authenticity and the perceived need to defend their specific identity in relation to Roman reforms. Greek Catholics were passionate about this affair of the calendar. One of them even wrote a poem about it, printed in Cairo. It was a response to those who had attacked the supporters of the Julian calendar. Composed of 247 verses, it was an acid, but poetic attack against those who changed their calendar.[16] The use of the printing press contributed to the politicization of the Greek Catholic population and allowed for involvement of the flock into clerical affairs.

Those who were opposed to Baḥūt chose to denounce him to the Ottoman authorities, accusing him of trying to turn the Greek Catholics into Franks. The term Franks, meaning Europeans, was chosen on purpose to instill the notion of betrayal and connivance with foreign power in the mind of the governor, and obtain a punishment. Āklīmintūs Baḥūt alarmed by this denunciation, called upon the French consuls of Aleppo and Damascus for

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[13] Ibid, vol. 24, p. 652, Letter of Agabios, April 20th 1857.
[14] Ibid, vol. 24, p. 652, Letter of Agabios, April 20th 1857.
[15] Ibid, vol. 25, p. 1, Ibrahim and Nicolas Arkaci, Antonio Jared, Antonio Nasrallah Michel and Jaz Dehhan, Giorgio Giahel, undated.
[16] Ibid, vol. 24, p. 604, Anonymous, 1857.

help to convince the Ottoman governor that this was not a civil reform but a purely ecclesiastical one, which had nothing to do with the Ottoman authorities.[17] Indeed, Ottoman authorities could not intervene in ecclesiastical issues, but had the right to play a role in civil issues, especially if it caused disorders and disturbed the social peace. It could be argued that the change of calendar however was quite a civil issue as it touched upon the public life of local Christians.

The allies of Maẓlūm such as Ḥannā Frayǧ and Yūsuf ʿAyrūṭ, under Austrian protection, led the opposition to the Gregorian calendar among the laity. On the other hand, the traditional elites, closer to France, tended to support the patriarch Baḥūṭ. Ḥannā Frayǧ attempted to raise the population against the traditional elite, including the Baḥrī family. To do so, he composed petitions signed by some five hundred Greek Catholics against these notables who supported the patriarch.[18] While petitions had beforehand been signed by a few notables, in the mid-19th century the number of signatures increased considerably, showing the relevance of displaying majority will rather than the support of a few notables.

For the commercial elite, the change of calendar would put an end to joint celebrations of holy days with their Orthodox counterparts. On the other hand, for the traditional elite which had close links to France and had married into Latin families, the adoption of the Gregorian calendar made more sense as many of them had already adopted the Latin rite informally. Then, the competition between of the traditional elite's and merchant's patrons, France and Austria, furthered the factionalism within the Greek Catholic laity.

There were multiple motivations among the laity for opposing the new calendar. Paradoxically, some of those who opposed the Gregorian calendar were actually those who

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[17] Ibid, vol. 24, p. 624, Clemente, February 27th 1857.
S.C.P.F, Index delle Lettere, Greci Melchiti, 1857, vol. 16, p. 203, Prefect Propaganda-French consuls Damascus and Aleppo, March 1857.
[18] A.E, 189/PO, vol. 9, patriarch Clemente-Outrey, February 18th 1857.

had demanded to adopt the Latin rite beforehand and had seen their demands refused.[19] Some of the opponents had indeed attempted to adopt the Latin rite beforehand, probably to avoid the authority of their clergy members because of personal or general grievances. For example, some of the opponents to the Gregorian calendar in Alexandria agreed to give up their attacks against the patriarch if they were allowed to enter the Latin rite.[20] Their opposition to the new calendar; while seemingly in contradiction with their earlier demands to adopt the Latin rite, was a continuation of this effort to emancipate themselves from the increasing authority of their religious leaders.[21] Seeing that their efforts at finding a compromise bore no results, some of them became Greek Orthodox.[22] This observation points to the political stakes behind discourses of authenticity presented by the opponents. The question of rite was a tool of negotiation, a way to circumvent authority and to challenge power holders when they crossed what was perceived as the limits of their prerogatives, established by custom.

Beyond issues of authenticity and identity, the disregard for the opinion of the bishops in the application of the calendar was one of the main reasons for their opposition. It even cost Baḥūṯ his stronger supporter, the bishop of Beirut Agabios Rīyāšī. While Rīyāšī had first supported Baḥūṯ, mainly because he opposed Maẓlūm's party, he quickly turned against him. In a letter to the Propaganda, he explained that while he had helped to get Baḥūṯ appointed, his actions did not match his expectations. He especially criticized the fact that he omitted to ask the opinion of his bishops before enforcing the new calendar.[23] The issue of the power struggle between the bishops and patriarch regarding their relative authority took the precedence over factional politics. Rīyāšī thus allied with those who had supported Maẓlūm.

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[19] Vatican Apostolic Archive: Delegazione apostolica al Libano, vol. 6, p. 111, Brunoni-Barnabo, August 1st 1858.
[20] *S.C.P.F, (S.C) Greci Melchiti,* vol. 25, p. 477, Giaci, July 24th 1859. Such is the example of Ibrahim Nawfal of Alexandria, who was the main opponent of the calendar in the city and in 1859 decided to ask to pass to the Latin rite.
[21] Ibid, Vol 25, p. 461, Guasco, 26 june 1859
[22] Ibid, vol. 24, p. 653, Agabios Riachi, April 20th 1857.
[23] *S.C.P.F, (S.C) Greci Melchiti,* vol. 25, p. 247, Agabios Riachi- Cardinal Barnabo, February 1st 1858.

In his opposition to the patriarch, Rīyāšī created alliances with the new commercial elite who also opposed the calendar.[24]

1.2 Role of External Actors

The attitude of the Propaganda in this affair was paradoxical. At first, its approach was inclusive and attempting to avoid scandals or rebellion. Delegates were instructed to try to bring as many Catholics as possible into their fold. However, faced with a strong resistance and claims from the local population, the delegates soon adopted an attitude of inquisition, trying to determine who was really Catholic and who remained Orthodox in their heart but wore Catholic clothes. Indeed, the apostolic delegate said that the application of the calendar was a way to differentiate the real Catholics from the fake ones.[25] These contradictory attitudes are rooted in the ambivalent position of the Holy See's regarding the question of the integrity of oriental rites. The oriental rites were to be preserved but at the same time the Latin rite, being condoned by the Roman Church, was considered as superior. The Holy See considered that it had the right to modify parts of the rites it identified as abuses or which had deviated from the tradition of the Oriental Churches.[26]

The dispute regarding the calendar was embedded in power dynamics in Damascus. The governor was closer to the Greek Catholics who opposed the calendar, as their leaders were employed in the administration.[27] Only one member of the administration and member of the traditional elite, Ğibrān Baḥrī, supported the patriarch. He was the representative of the Catholics on the tribunal of investigation. When he voiced his support for the patriarch in March 1857, he was demoted by the brother-in-law of the governor Izzet Paşa who was at the head of the tribunal. The opponents among the employees probably promoted this

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[24] Vatican Apostolic Archive: Delegazione apostolica al Libano, vol. 6, p 13-15, Brunoni-Barbano, September 20th 1857.
[25] Ibid, vol. 6, p. 58, Brunoni-Valerga, March 10th 1857.
[26] Heyberger, "Pro nunc," 547.
[27] A.E, 189/PO, vol. 9, Outrey-Thouvenel, March 19th 1857.

destitution.[28] Ğibrān Baḥrī wrote to Istanbul with the help of the French consul to contest this dismissal. In May 1857, Izzet Paşa gave Ğibrān Baḥrī his post back after a *ferman* was issued to this effect. The *ferman* stipulated that Ğibrān Baḥrī had been fired upon suspicion of partiality regarding the ideas of the Greek Catholic patriarch.[29]

Both sides wanted to obtain the exclusive use of the Greek Catholic cathedral of Damascus. The governor Izzet Paşa ordered the patriarch to put an end to the infighting between the two factions and threatened to call all the parties to the *mağlis* to arbitrate between them. The patriarch first resisted this intrusion in religious affairs and refused to appear in front of the *mağlis*. However, since civil disturbances had issued from the imposition of the calendar, the governor decided to ask Istanbul for instructions.[30] In March, the governor received a *ferman* ordering him not to intervene and to leave the cathedral to the patriarch who had more followers.[31] Yet, the division did not disappear. When two priests celebrated the office according to the Julian calendar in their private houses, they were suspended by the patriarch. They thus again asked Izzet Paşa, the governor, to intervene.[32]

Izzet Paşa, proposed the compromise of separating the cathedral in two parts, one for each party. This solution had already been used in Sidon in 1850 to find a solution for the fight between Greek Orthodox and Greek Catholics.[33] However the separation was not to the liking of either party. The opponents then staged a protest in the seraglio in order to obtain the cathedral as a whole for their party. In their slogans, they also protested against the intervention of the European clergy in the affairs of their Church and its encroachment on the rights of the sultan. By presenting the issue of the calendar as a question of Ottoman jurisdiction and foreign intervention, they were sure to obtain the support of the governor.

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[28] Ibid. BOA, HR.MKT.186.23, April 12th 1857.
[29] A.E, 189/PO, vol. 9, Outrey-Thouvenel, May 7th 1857; BOA, HR.MKT.186.23, April 12th 1857.
[30] F.O. 195/458, Misk-Redcliffe, March 4th 1857.
[31] A.E, 189/PO, vol. 9, Outrey-Thouvenel, March 8Th 1857.
[32] F.O. 195/458, Misk-Redcliffe, April 23rd 1857.
[33] This solution had already been used in Sidon in 1850 to find a solution for the fight between Greek Orthodox and Greek Catholics; BOA, A.DVN. 63.69.5, October 2nd 1850.

However, seeing that this protest did not lead to a control of the cathedral, they decided to celebrate a mass according to the Julian calendar in its vicinity. Two masses thus took place next to each other. According to the French consul, when the pro-patriarch faction came out of the mass in the cathedral they were attacked by the opponents.[34] The Ottoman archives also record this event, but do not accuse the opponents of initiating the fight.[35]

When the policemen came to put an end to the fight, a foreign protégé pointed to them the attackers who were then arrested. As it turns out, the prisoners were exclusively from those who supported the patriarch and the new calendar. They were all inhabitants of the Maydān neighborhood. The governor and the *serasker*[36] Kerim Paşa, upon realizing this unfair treatment, planned to release the prisoners. However, they could not arrest the other side who had foreign protection statuses, especially from Russia, Austria and Prussia. In the meantime, when then inhabitants of the Maydān heard the news of their arrest, five hundred workers united and rose in rebellion, attacking the opponents' houses, with the support of their fellow Muslim Maydānī. When the governor saw the disorder caused by these arrests, he feared further trouble and freed the prisoner. However the Russian and Prussian consuls later accused the prisoners of having wounded some of their protégés.[37] This event points to fact that the conflict over the calendar was not solely a clerical issue but spread to the larger population. It led to various events of violence between the two parties, pointing to the increasing politicization of Greek Catholics. Then, a class dynamic is observable in this account. We find again the inhabitants of the Maydān, mostly middle class and poor, taking opposite positions to the former wealthy allies of Maẓlūm. It also point to the strong neighborhood solidarity across religious borders in the neighborhood of Maydān. This

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[34] A.E, 189/PO, vol. 9, Outrey-Walewski, March 13th 1857.
[35] BOA, HR.MKT.187.8 , April 16th 1857.
[36] Army leader.
[37] A.E, 189/PO, vol. 9, Outrey-Walewski, March 13th 1857.

solidarity is also illustrated by the fact that during the violence of 1860, the Greek Catholics of the Maydān were protected from the attacks by the *āġāwāt* of the neighborhood.[38]

In April 1857 came the fast of Lent, the divisions between the two camps regarding the calendar were highlighted by the visibility of the distinction between those fasting and those who did not. It is in that period of fasting that the Grand Vizier wrote an order to the governor of Damascus not to tolerate the division between what he describes as the 'Damascenes and the Catholics'. The *ferman* emphasized the need to preserve public peace and security. However, the Ottoman government did not give clear directions regarding the actual policy to be followed by governors. This order stated that communities were free to practice their religious rites without outside intervention but that internal divisions were disturbing social peace. It especially blamed the party opposed to the patriarch. The decree stated that: 'the faction opposed to the supporters of the patriarch is having bothersome behaviors, like attacks and corruption". Furthermore the order emphasized that peace should be fostered and that the patriarch should be maintained and protected.[39] Given the emphasis put on the authority of the patriarch as the main intermediary of the *millet* in the first part of the 19th century, this direction taken by the central government was expected. However, the actions of the local governor rather seemed to be influenced by his alliances built locally than by official orders coming from Istanbul.

The French consul Max Outrey went to see the governor Izzet Paşa to discuss this *ferman* but then he heard rumors coming from the seraglio that the *ferman* actually supported the action of the opponents. Given the clearness of the *ferman* it is doubtful that it could be interpreted in this manner.[40] Although Izzet Paşa received instructions not to favor the

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[38] al-Bouʾi, *Nubḏa Muḫtaṣara*, 119.

[39] BOA, HR MKT 184 43 1273 SH 06 2 Shabban 1 april 1857, "ve hususiye orada bulunan patrik tarafina fark-ı mühalif canıbından su-ı fasad ve hucum gibi muamalet namurdiye vuku'-I hiss olunur ise" "gerek asayış-ı memleketin vikayesi ve gerek patrik-i mumaileyhin sıyanet muhafaza olurunda kamaliye takayyud ve itina olunmasi lazem geleceğinin tekid ve bayanile"

[40] A.E, 189/PO, vol. 9, Outrey-Walewski, April 8th 1857.

opponents, he was engaged in a patron-client relationship with the notables opposed to the patriarch and thus decided not to act against them.

The opposition to the calendar was not limited to Damascus but actually caused issues all over *Bilād al-Šām*. Almost all cities which had a Greek Catholic population suffered from these divisions. In the bishopric of Yabroud, Homs and Hama led by the bishop Mīḫāʾīl ʿAṭā, there were divisions regarding the calendar which led to violence in regards to the control of the places of worship in the villages of Maʿara and Ṣaydnāyā.[41]

The governor of Aleppo, in a letter to the governor of Damascus, mentioned that conflicts also arose in the city after the spread of the news regarding the calendar. But there the French consul intervened quickly to stop the rebellion against the patriarch. The consul of Aleppo then wrote to the consul of Damascus that this issue was only a religious affair, and that nothing could be done by the government.[42]

In the large cities of the Lebanese coast the Greek Catholic community was also divided. The governor of Sidon wrote to the governor of Damascus, stating that the intelligentsia of the *millet* was against the change of calendar.[43] In the same period, the sub-governor and tax-collector of Jerusalem sent a letter to the governor of Jaffa warning him of the division in the Greek Catholic Church. He told him not to interfere in this ecclesiastical issue but that order and security should be maintained. He stated that in Jerusalem the members of the *millet* were no more than four families, while in Jaffa there were at least fifty families and thus the division could take a more dramatic turn. Indeed, when the patriarch sent the order to change the calendar in Jaffa, some Greek Catholics protested and a fight occurred

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[41] F.O. 195/458, Wood-Redcliffe, August 19th 1857. Interestingly, in the same village in 1846 a married Greek Catholic woman was seduced by an officer in the service of the Porte and she asked to convert to Islam, a diplomatic conflict followed involving France and the Damascene governor; F.O. 195/226, Timoni-Canning, December 2nd 1846.
[42] BOA, HR.MKT.186.11, April 11th 1857.
[43] Ibid; The Greek Catholic elite was influential in Sidon and often created alliances with the governor, see for example Mishāqah, *Murder, Mayhem*, 117.

in front of the church. Efforts were made by the governor to keep security and to prevent fights during the Sunday mass.[44]

While the archives of the Propaganda seldom mention Greek Catholics of Egypt through the first part of the 19th century, the issue of the calendar brought them back into the center of the community. The main actors of the Egyptian Greek Catholic community wrote a letter of protest directly to the pope in 1857. Members of the ʿAyrūṭ, Zuġīb, Kaḥīl, Būlād, ʿAwād, Dahān, Nawfal families, described the division of the community caused in their eyes by the patriarch's innovations and his unilateral decision-taking process. They also argued that changing the calendar was particularly difficult for Greek Orthodox who had recently became Greek Catholics and had been told by missionaries that they could keep their calendar as part of Roman policy in regards to the preservation of the integrity of the oriental rites. Seeing that the patriarch was not compromising, they went to the Greek Orthodox patriarch and were offered a church. However, they waited to see if they could find another solution.[45] The leaders of the Greek Catholic community in Alexandria also accused the French consuls of having encouraged Baḥūṯ to change the calendar.[46]

In the end, Rome was called upon by both parties and a delegate arrived to take a decision regarding this affair. The delegate first went to Alexandria together with the French consul and convinced the Egyptian government to punish those who did masses in their houses according to the Julian calendar. The bishop of Cairo, Bāsil Kfūrī, who had been ordained by Maẓlūm, favored the opponents.[47] He managed to counter the influence of the French consul and delegate on the local government by obtaining a letter from the Grand Vizier to the viceroy of Egypt to allow the opponents to do masses as they wished.[48] In July, Baḥūṯ felt overwhelmed by the opposition and chose to resign. He took refuge in the

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[44] BOA, HR.MKT.186.11, April 11th 1857.
[45] *S.C.P.F, (S.C) Greci Melchiti,* vol. 24, p. 688, Leaders of Alexandria, April 20th 1857.
[46] Ibid.
[47] Ibid*, vol. 24, p. 794, Agabios Riachi, August 1857.
[48] Ibid*, vol. 24, p. 903, Consul general of France in Alexandria, September 20th 1857.

Salvatorian monastery. However, his resignation was not accepted by the Holy See and the delegate was instructed to orchestrate his return.[49]

2. Popular Will, Freedom and Self-determination

The issue of the calendar brought to light the contested notions of popular will and freedom which had been favored indirectly by the *Tanzimat*. While the institutionalization of the *millet* system at first reinforced the authority of the patriarch, the discourses of equality embedded in the *Tanzimat* reforms encouraged demands for a participative decision-making process within the Church.[50] These notions underlined the conflict which took place regarding the calendar in Tyre. When Baḫūṯ passed through the city, he asked the bishop Aṯanāsīyūs Ṣabbāġ to declare the application of the Gregorian calendar to the flock. The opponents to the new calendar rebelled against this order and expelled violently Aṯanāsīyūs Ṣabbāġ from the bishopric.[51] They forbade him from celebrating the mass.[52] The governor of Tyr intervened after the insistence of the French consul and apostolic delegate and agreed to give the bishop the keys of the church again, only if he refrained from imposing the new calendar. Aṯanāsīyūs Ṣabbāġ refused and so the affair was referred to Istanbul.[53] At that point, Ṣabbāġ, angered by the intervention of the governor in his jurisdiction, wrote a letter to the government threatening to abandon his Ottoman citizenship and to become French. Outraged, the Ottoman government asked him to take back his threat.[54] Religious identity as well as political loyalty was used as a negotiation tool. The question of the calendar installed a variety of political strategies which in the long term damaged the image of Greek Catholics in the eyes of the government and other Ottoman subjects.

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[49] Vatican Apostolic Archive: Delegazione apostolica al Libano, vol. 6, p. 120, Brunoni-Barnabo, August 15th 1858.
[50] A process described by Makdisi, "Corrupting the Sublime Sultanate," 196; S.C.P.F. (S.C.) Greci Melchitti, vol. 25, p. 639, Henry de Pruniere- General Jesuits, January 31st 1860.
[51] *S.C.P.F, (S.C) Greci Melchiti,* vol. 25, p. 247 Agabios Riachi-Barnabo, February 1st 1859.
[52] Vatican Apostolic Archive: Delegazione apostolica al Libano, vol. 6, p. 162, Valerga-Barnabo, December 9th 1858.
[53] *S.C.P.F, (S.C) Greci Melchiti,* vol. 25, p. 344, Annex to Valerga, February 14th 1859.
[54] Ibid*,* vol. 25, p. 358, Hassun, February 23rd 1859.

The relationship in Tyre between the bishop and the notables got worse in May 1859 when the bishop went out of the city to do a pastoral visit during Easter. The American vice consul James Lacad, the Austrian protégé Bešāra Ṭoʿma and the British protégé Paolo Ellez went to the house of the bishop with other Greek Catholics and stole his belongings, as they considered them to belong to the flock who financed the bishopric. The bishop left Tyre enraged.[55] Ecclesiastical property was increasingly contested by the population, who developed the notion of popular ownership rooted in the role of the laity in financing the construction of the churches. They saw this economic contribution as awarding them a role in the decision-making process.

Different power-holders had opposed conceptions of the greater good and of the decision-making process. The apostolic delegate Valerga stressed that for this issue, the decision-making power lied in the majority among bishops only. Since the issue had been brought to the synod and the majority of bishops had agreed to it, it had to be enforced.[56] By kicking out the bishop, the inhabitants of Tyre thus left the Catholic realm. He mentioned that the constitution of the Catholic Church was based upon the authority that bishops inherited from God, not on consent.[57]

On the other hand, the governor of Beirut decided that the Greek Catholic population of Tyre would be surveyed and if the majority opposed the bishop he would have to step down or give up the calendar. If, on the other hand, the majority supported him, he would be given the keys of the church.[58] This was a radical change from a governmentality based upon enforcing the will of the patriarch which was in place in the earlier years. This previous top-down policy had indeed failed to solve divisions and the Ottoman government had shifted towards more inclusion of the laity in the affairs of the churches, as exemplified by the Islahat

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[55] Ibid, vol. 25, p. 421, Valerga, May 6th 1859.
[56] Ibid, vol. 25, p. 379, Valerga-Agabios, February 23rd 1859.
[57] Ibid, Vol 25, p. 393, Valerga, April 4th 1859.
[58] Vatican Apostolic Archive: Delegazione apostolica al Libano, vol. 6, p. 200, Valerga-Barnabo, March 30th 1859.

Fermanı of 1856 and the announcement of the creation of lay councils to help the patriarchs rule.[59] While the central government seems to have continued to support outwardly the rights of the patriarch, some governors rather adopted a policy of supporting majority will and countering the authority of the patriarchs or bishops if they lacked legitimacy in the eyes of their constituents. In the affair of Tyre, in the eyes of the governor the decision-making lied in the popular will of each bishopric. For the first time, the patriarch did not play a role in the decision-making process of the governor. This approach was confirmed by the French ambassador who informed the apostolic delegate that under Ottoman law, the patriarchs or bishops cannot impose any innovation on the nation without the agreement of the majority. The Ottoman central government decided that a provincial *mağlis* was to determine the will of the majority in each district.[60] The apostolic delegate Valerga saw the necessity of popular consensus for innovation as potentially destructive for the Catholic church.[61] It reflected on developments in Europe which threatened the authority of the pope.[62] The development of the notion of popular sovereignty and majority will was thus being challenged by the Propaganda, yet encouraged by the Ottoman government to remedy the severe divisions within the community.

These conflicting notions also brought to light the multiple interpretations of the question of freedom of religion. Religious freedom granted by the decrees was interpreted in a variety of ways. It could mean that religious communities were free to conduct their religious affairs without intervention of the Ottoman government, as the French consul and the Greek Catholics clergy saw it. The opponents to the calendar took this understanding of freedom a step further and argued that individuals were free to decide what they believed and that they

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[59] On the decree see: see Aylin Koçunyan, *Negotiating the Ottoman Constitution, 1839-1876* (Leuven: Peeters, 2018); Aylin Koçunyan, "The *Millet* System and the Challenge of Other Confessional Models, 1856–1865," *Ab Imperio* 2017, no. 1 (2017): 59-85.
[60] *S.C.P.F, (S.C) Greci Melchiti,* vol. 25, p. 390, Valerga, March 18th 1859.
[61] Ibid, vol. 25, p. 393, Valerga, April 4th 1859.
[62] Raymond Grew, "Liberty and the Catholic Church in Nineteenth-Century Europe," in *Freedom and Religion in the Nineteenth Century,* ed. Richard Helmstadter (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997), 202.

were free from intervention not only from the Ottoman government but also from the clergy's authority and the Holy See's interference. These 'subaltern' interpretations of the reforms are not limited to Greek Catholics but are rather a defining feature of the *Tanzimat* period in the region.[63] These interpretations, which contrasted with the intentions behind the drafting of the *Tanzimat* decrees, transgressed the rigid social order and challenged various types of inherited privilege, including religious and lay elite leadership within non-Muslim communities.[64]

The affair of the calendar and the violent interactions around it points to a variety of dynamics. First, the conflict at hand involved conflicting conceptions of authority, Church hierarchy and community which developed in the period of the *Tanzimat*. It became the locus of the factionalism which had been observed under the patriarchate of Maẓlūm. Then, the division of the ecclesiastic community over the issue of the calendar had spread beyond the clergy and affected directly the population. As it became an issue of identification and political belonging, it aroused popular passions and mobilization and led to violence between opponents and supporters of the new calendar.

3. Patronage and the *Millet*: Eastern and Western Greek Catholics

Foreign powers were involved in the issue of the calendar on an unprecedented level. The consuls, representatives of the Holy See and the Ottoman governors took advantage of this dispute to obtain the upper hand in their competition for influence. These various external actors were sought upon by different factions as patrons to increase their influence on the institutions of the Church. This involvement contributed to the polarization of the Greek Catholic community and even led to an attempted schism within the Church.

The opponents to the calendar suffered a setback when on April 16th 1857 a council of ministers met in Istanbul in order to agree on a plan of action regarding the division within the Greek Catholic church. It was attended by the French, British, Greek and Iranian ambassadors.

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[63] Makdisi, "Corrupting the Sublime Sultanate," 196.
[64] Ibid, 195.

The council of ministers finally decided in favor of the patriarch.[65] This decision was a severe blow to the opposition. The governor of Damascus, Izzet Paşa, saw that he had no other choice than to abandon the opponents given the numerous decisions taken against them. At the same time, Austria also demoted the opponents from its protection, probably because they lost their official support.[66]

From that point onwards, the opponents understood that the government would always support the head of the *millet* and thus decided to change their strategy and ask for their own *millet*. They decided to appeal directly to Istanbul and sent an envoy.[67] He was instructed to ask to form a new community called the *Rūm Kāṯūlīk Šarqī*, the Eastern *Rum* Catholic, and to have their own patriarch.[68] They framed their desire for autonomy on claims of authenticity against the process of 'Latinization' exemplified by the calendar and foreign influence. They referred to the patriarch and his followers as the Western Greek Catholic, pointing to their closeness to the Europeans.[69] The institutionalization of the *millet* system turned religious distinction into a legitimate basis of claims of access to resources and political power, encouraging the multiplication of demands for emancipation from the religious authorities.

While the opponents had lost the support of the governor and the Austrian consul, soon a new actor intervened in the internal divisions of the Greek Catholic Church. Russia had named in 1857 Cyril of Melitopolis as the first Russian bishop of Jerusalem. This nomination marked the return of Russia in the Ottoman Empire after the defeat of the Crimean war.[70] The Russian Foreign minister Prince Alexander Gochakov and the Grand Duke Constantine Nikolaevich directed the foreign policy towards the Ottoman Empire after the war, and they believed it was essential to revive the Russian Mission to Palestine in March

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[65] BOA.HR.MKT.187.8, April 16th 1857.
[66] A.E, 189/PO, vol. 9, Outrey-Thouvenel, May 7th 1857; BOA, HR.MKT.186.23, April 12th 1857.
[67] A.E, 18/PO/A, vol. 9, Outrey-Thouvenel, May 7th 1857.
[68] A.E, 18/PO/A, vol. 9, Outrey-Thouvenel, May 22nd 1857.
[69] Argument used by the opponents against the patriarch A.E, 18/PO/A, vol. 9, Outrey-Thouvenel, March 13th 1857.
[70] Denis Vovchenko, "Creating Arab Nationalism? Russia and Greece in Ottoman Syria and Palestine (1840–1909)," *Middle Eastern Studies* 49, no.6 (2013): 904.

1857 in order to counter the declining influence of Russia in the region.[71] Russia's envoy to Syria and Lebanon found these lands empty of Russian presence while other powers were very active in the region.**[72]** A Russian consulate was also established in Damascus in this period.

While Āklīmintūs Baḥūt was touring the coast, the Russian bishop of Jerusalem took advantage of the opportunity and visited Damascus. The city was the theatre of a conflict between the patriarchal vicar Bāsil ʿAbdo, the Salvatorian monks and the notables.[73] Damascene notables were not convinced by ʿAbdo, and the notable Ḥanā ʿAnḫūrī argued that the vicar had to be a bishop.[74] The opponents to the calendar were especially critical of ʿAbdo who had imposed the Gregorian calendar and refused to assist his mass.[75] In this context of contested clerical authority, the arrival of the Russian bishop opened new perspectives for the opponents. The bishop met with the them and promised to finance a church for them. At the same time, a notable opposed to Baḥūt, Ḥanā Musamirī was touring Mount Lebanon to obtain support for the opposition. He managed to rally the support of the Greek Catholics of Dayr al-Qamar. The Russian bishop then visited the bishop Rīyāšī in Beirut, raising worries from the apostolic delegate and French consuls.[76] Contacts between the opponents and Greek Orthodox clergy were also worrisome for the apostolic delegates.[77] In March 1859, the link between Russia and the opponents was strengthened when the opponent Ḥannā Frayǧ was given the post of intermediary vice-consul of the Russian consulate in the absence of its titular.[78]

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[71] Kildani, *Modern Christianity,* 72.
[72] Ibid.
[73] Vatican Apostolic Archive: Delegazione apostolica al Libano, vol. 6, Valerga-Barnabo, August 7th 1858.
[74] *S.C.P.F, (S.C) Greci Melchiti,* P 212, vol 25, 28 sept 1858,
[75] Vatican Apostolic Archive: Delegazione apostolica al Libano, vol. 6, p. 165, Valerga-Barnabo, December 19th 1858.
[76] Ibid, vol. 6, p. 159, Valerga- Barnabo, October 29th 1858.
[77] Ibid.
[78] A.E, 166/PO-Serie D/20, vol. 5, Outrey-Lallemand, March 31st 1859.

Russian strategy of influence in the region coincided with the interests of the opponents among the Greek Catholics. In general, Greek Catholics felt sidelined from the protection of Britain awarded to Druzes and France to Maronites.[79] Given the pockets of Greek Catholics in Zaḥle and the Anti-Lebanon, they were an interesting community to turn to for those who tried to compete with French and British influence in the region. Russia thus turned to the Greek Catholics as possible protégés in addition to Greek Orthodox, which explains their efforts to support the opponents and counter French protection given to the patriarch.[80] Then, if they could be brought to union with the Greek Orthodox, they could unite with Greek Orthodox of Hāṣbayā and Rāšayā and form a whole region under the influence of Russia which could then ask to have their own *kaymamam*. These plans for Mount Lebanon and the Anti-Lebanon were obvious to Ottoman decision-makers. In January 1861 the Ottoman ambassador Anstarchi Bey wrote to Ali Paşa mentioning a confidential letter of the Russian cabinet to create a *kaymakam* for the Orthodox in Mount Lebanon to increase their influence.[81] The schism of the Greek Catholic church allowed Russia to impose itself as a possible patron of Catholics in the region and was part of a larger demographic policy to carve a zone of Russian influence between French and British protégés in Mount Lebanon and the coast.

Strong of Russian support, the bishops who opposed the patriarch planned to send priests to all the bishoprics to officiate according to the old calendar.[82] In this context, another meeting took place in Zaḥle with bishop and notables. Both Ahmed Paşa, the governor of Damascus and the governor of Beirut sent envoys to this reunion to try to exert their influence.[83] The meeting in Zaḥle apparently had the purpose of creating a new territorial organization of the Greek Catholic church and placing at its head one of the

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[79] *S.C.P.F, (S.C) Greci Melchiti,* vol. 25, p. 626, Ambassador Austria-Cardinal Antoneli, January 12th 1860.
[80] F.O, 78/1520, Brant-Bulwer, November 15th 1860.
[81] Sïnan Kuneralp, *Ottoman diplomatic documents on "the Eastern question"* (Istanbul : Isis Press, 2009), 207
[82] *S.C.P.F, (S.C) Greci Melchiti,* vol. 25, p. 492, Bishops Agabios, Meletios, Teodosio, August 12th 1859.
[83] *S.C.P.F, (S.C) Greci Melchiti,* vol. 25, p. 499, Valerga, August 26th 1859.

opponents. The bishops proceeded to divide between themselves the various patriarchal bishoprics. The bishopric of Beirut would include Alexandria, Zaḥle would include Cairo, Baalbek would include Damascus, and Sidon the bishopric of Tyre. They wrote these decrees and published them in the various bishoprics. Then, they planned to ask for an archbishop to represent them in Istanbul.[84] However, the fragile union of bishops with otherwise conflicting interests was soon to be tested. The meeting did not lead to an agreement for the other bishops resented Rīyāšī' monopoly on the decision-making process.[85]

Assisting the meeting, Ḥannā Frayǧ, in a secret letter found in the French consular archives, allegedly said to another notable, Ḫalīl Āyūb,[86] that he should take his orders from Sadık Effendi. Sadık Effendi was the special agent of the Ottoman government sent in order to advise the governors in their relation with foreign consuls. He arrived in Damascus in 1859.[87] Sadık Effendi was present at the meeting and intervened. According to the French bishop of Beirut Comte de Bentivoglio, Sadık Effendi related to the participants that the Ottoman government looked negatively upon the supporters of the calendar as it did upon those who demanded foreign protection. He allegedly mentioned that Catholics were the most suspicious in the eyes of the government because they called upon France to intervene in their internal issues while they were Ottoman subjects. According to him, the Ottoman government voluntarily frustrated the interests of the Catholics when they called upon France in their issues. He reminded the crowd that the Ottoman Empire was independent according to the Treaty of Paris, and foreign powers could no longer intervene in the affairs of the mountain with the pretext to establish order. He then mentioned that the bishop of Tyre had asked for French protection and for this reason the Ottoman government did not take his side. Sadık

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[84] A.E, 166/PO-Serie D/20, vol. 5, Clemente-French Ambassador in Istanbul, September 22nd 1859.
[85] *S.C.P.F, (S.C) Greci Melchiti,* vol. 25*,* p. 499, Valerga, August 26th 1859.
[86] Antoun Ayoub had been the civil procurer of Maẓlūm in Jerusalem.
[87] F.O, 195/601, Brant-Bulwer, January 4th 1859.

Effendi demanded to create a civil patriarch to deal with the government directly, thus by passing the patriarch.[88]

The actual directions given to Sadık Effendi cannot be easily determined. The Ottoman government however sent a letter of blame to the governor of Damascus, Ahmed Paşa, for sending envoys to the meeting.[89] Ahmed Paşa, responding to the Grand Vizier's letter of reprimand, recognized that he recorded the declarations made at Zaḥle and reported them, but for him it didn't mean that he was preferring one party over another. He argued that he just wanted to tell the government about the foreign interference taking place in Zaḥle.[90] Ahmed Paşa argued that the intervention of foreign powers, especially France, was detrimental to the execution of justice. He stated that the issue would have ended long time ago if it wasn't for foreign intervention in favor of one group or the other.[91]

The views of Ahmed Paşa regarding the calendar indeed seemed to favor the opponents. On April 11, Ahmed Paşa wrote to the Grand Vizier about the issue of the calendar. Enclosed was a letter from the governor of Aleppo, a letter from the governor of Damascus to the Grand Vizier, a letter of the governor of Damascus to the governor of Sidon, and a letter from the governor of Sidon about the calendar.[92] Ahmed Paşa accused foreigners and the Latin priests to have corrupted the loyalty of members of the Greek Catholic community, with the tacit support of the patriarch.[93] Ahmed Paşa clearly favored to opponents and was opposed to the policies of the patriarch because it invited foreign intervention. Ahmed Paşa's support of the opponents was underlined an attempt to become their patron with the objective to use their political influence to bring the anti-Lebanon and especially Zaḥle under his jurisdiction. When Ahmed Paşa sent Sadık effendi to Zaḥle, the

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[88] *S.C.P.F, (S.C) Greci Melchiti,* vol. 25, p. 506, Bentivoglio, August 28th 1859.
[89] Ibid, vol. 25, p. 515, Thouvenel-Barnabo, October 4th 1859.
[90] A.E, 166/PO-Serie D/20, vol. 5, Ahmed Paşa-Grand Vizir, November 18th 1859.
[91] Ibid.
[92] BOA, HR.MKT.186.11, April 11th 1857.
[93] BOA, HR.MKT.196.98, August 18th 1858.

French consul suspected the aforementioned intrigue of Ahmed Paşa and Sadık Effendi to create a Greek region in the Anti-Lebanon who would be put under the direct rule of the Ottoman government.[94]

The status of Zaḥle was indeed the object of power struggles on many levels in 1859, a year characterized by chaos in Mount Lebanon. Both the Maronite and the Druze kaymakamates were led by acting-*kaymakams* because the real leaders had to escape. As per the Maronite *kaymakam*, Bašīr Aḥmad, his authority was challenged by the Maronite Ḫāzin shaykhs who did not accept his predominance and his attempts to get rid of the tax-collectors. In addition, the peasants were rebelling against the Ḫāzin shaykhs, forcing them to escape.[95]

The inhabitants of Zaḥle, who were under the leadership of the Maronite *kaymakam* felt sidelined by the institutions which were based upon Druze and Maronite dominance.[96] They had already asked in January 1859 to be put under an Ottoman governor because they rejected the leadership of the *kaymakam* Emir Bašīr Aḥmad.[97] In April, the inhabitants of Zaḥle once again asked to be ruled by an Ottoman governor. In consequence, they were put under the authority of the governor of Sidon. However there was a strong competition between the governor of Sidon and Damascus over the control of the city. Ahmad Paşa thus obtained in July, the attachment of the Zaḥle to the *paşalık* of Damascus, yet the application of this measure was delayed.[98] It is in this context that the meeting of the bishops took place. This meeting reveals the plans that the governor had for the Šarqī opponents to the patriarch. Indeed, at the issue of that meeting, the opponents asked the authorities for a sub-governor unrelated to the Maronite *kaymakam*. In response, Ahmed Paşa attached Zaḥle to the region of Damascus. In this manner, Zaḥle, Baalbek, Beirut and Sidon were combined in one

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[94] A.E, 166/PO-Serie D/20, vol. 5, Lanusse-Lavalette, May 23rd 1860.
[95] Accounts and Papers of the House of Commons, state Papers, Volume 69, enclosure no. 86, p. 66, General consul Moore to H. Bulwer, March 29th 1859.
[96] *S.C.P.F, (S.C) Greci Melchiti,* vol. 25, p. 626, Ambassador Austria-Cardinal Antoneli, January 12th 1860.
[97] Accounts and Papers of the House of Commons, state Papers, Volume 69, enclosure no. 2 in 82, p. 65, British Consul Brant to Bulwer, January 26th 1859.
[98] Accounts and Papers of the House of Commons, state Papers, Volume 69, enclosure no. 96, p. 74, British consul Brant to Bulwer, July 2nd 1859.

administrative district, which could have been the domain of the Greek Catholic Šarqī .[99] These four cities were not included in the double kaymakamate but surrounded it. The Šarqī, with four bishops in cities governed by the governor of Damascus, could thus pose a serious threat to the Maronite *kaymakam* of Mount Lebanon.[100] Ultimately, under French pressure, the inhabitants of Zaḥle changed their mind and refused their inclusion in the region of Damascus. Ahmad Paşa blamed the French for this change of mind which frustrated his interests.[101] The interest of various actors in the meeting of the opponent bishops in Zaḥle in September 1859 can thus be understood in the general context of the fight for influence in Mount Lebanon. The attempted schism was instrumentalized by the governor of Damascus as a tool for his political and territorial ambitions. His ambitions were frustrated by the internal divisions of the Greek Catholics, which can be seen as one of the causes of his inaction during the violence of 1860.

Ahmed Paşa had another cause of resentment towards Greek Catholics: their rebellion against taxation. The dispute over the calendar created a crisis of authority within the Greek Catholic community, which challenged the patriarch authority to collect taxes from the Greek Catholics. Indeed, just as the question of the calendar issue was unraveling and the community was divided, Āklīmintūs Baḥūṯ was again asked by the Ottoman government to pay for the *bedel-i askeri*. The crisis of authority suffered by Āklīmintūs Baḥūṯ rendered the collection of taxes by the patriarch an impossible affair. Indeed, to remit taxes to the patriarch meant to recognize his authority and legitimacy, which the opponents refused to do. In February 1859, the governor of Damascus Ahmed Paşa tried again to collect this tax and when the Christians refused he arrested some of their leaders from the Greek Orthodox and Greek Catholics. As it turned out, it was only the members of the pro-patriarch party among Greek Catholics that were put in jail. He then forced community leaders to sign a document

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[99] Farah , *The Politics of Intervention*, 530.
[100] A.E, 18/PO/A, vol. 10, Outrey-Thouvenel, September 7th 1859.
[101] Farah, *The Politics of Intervention*, 530.

swearing that they would pay the taxes and he demanded that they made a census of their flocks.[102] Arresting leaders when communities failed to pay taxes was a common practice in the Ottoman Empire as community leaders, be it lay or religious, were held responsible for the payment of taxes.[103]

The French consul saw the hand of the Greek Catholic employees of the seraglio behind this demand to collect tax and the subsequent arrests.[104] The governor, Ahmed Paşa might indeed have been misled by these employees. The opponents were either working for the administration or were protégés of foreign powers, in either case they could escape to pay the *bedel-i askeri*. They thus had all the reason to push Ahmed Paşa to use violence in order to collect the *bedel-i askeri*, and thus weaken their adversaries. The poor Greek Catholics were to bear the consequences of this conflict between elites. In response, they pushed their representatives to rebel against the tax. They allied with the poor Greek Orthodox and even attacked the Greek Orthodox bishop, who had to escape through the roof of the patriarchal residence. His assistant then complained to the governor that the Christian lower classes were trying to kill him and were in open rebellion.[105] This event is mentioned as one of the causes of the violence of 1860 and presented as a way for the governor to punish Christians for their rebellion.[106]

In conclusion, the affair of the calendar and the internal division of the Greek Catholic Church came to be at the center of a conflict of sovereignty between European powers, the Holy See and the Ottoman government. Greek Catholics were increasingly asked to define more precisely their political loyalty and to identify the border between civil and religious realms. Increasing incentives to define these communities' place in an increasingly internationalized environment were used by local Christians as tools of power to either

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[102] A.E, 166/PO-Serie D/20, vol. 5, Outrey-Lallemand, February 14th 1859.
[103] Borstein-Makovetsky, *Jewish Lay Leadership*, 92.
[104] A.E, 166/PO-Serie D/20, vol. 5, Outrey-Lallemand, February 14th 1859.
[105] Ibid.
[106] Mishāqah, *Murder, Mayhem*, 248.

reinforce of challenge the existing clerical and lay hierarchy. These dynamics challenge our ability to speak of Greek Catholics as a unit and highlights the importance of other identification basis which informed individual behavior, solidarities, narratives of community and political strategies. Behind questions of authenticity and identity, the issue of the calendar was also underlined by a crisis of clerical authority. The population was mobilized on the two sides of this conflict in an unprecedented manner, pointing to the increasing popular participation into internal affairs and the politicization of sub-identifications within the religious community. The strife around the imposition of the calendar and the inability of the patriarch to collect taxes due his lack of legitimacy were a strong cause of resentments among the Muslim population and the governor Ahmed Paşa towards Greek Catholics and featured as a cause of the violence of 1860.

CHAPTER 9: JEWISH-CHRISTIAN RELATIONS : COMPETITION, BLOOD LIBELS AND MONEY-LENDING

In 1860, the Christian quarter of the city of Damascus was attacked. Houses were plundered and many Christians lost their lives.[1] This attack was underlined by inter-confessional tensions between Christians and Muslims but also revealed the deteriorating relationship between Greek Catholics and Jews in the city. Indeed, Jews were accused of participating or at least benefiting from the violence against Christians.[2] The themes present in the accusations each reveals a specific aspect of the Damascene Jews social and economic position. It also points to the development of sectarian narratives and reveals the increasing confessional consciousness of Jews and Christians.

This chapter seeks to analyse the relationship between Christians and Jews in Damascus in the first part of the 19th century through the accusations against them in 1860 and inscribe them in the larger confessionalization of the society. First, we will analyse the accusations against the Jews in the aftermath of the violence of 1860. Second, this chapter will delve into the interpersonal competition between some Jewish and Greek Catholic families in the Ottoman administration which affected inter-confessional relations. Third, it will explore the financial role of the Jewish Damascene elite especially after the Crimean War and the accusations of blood libels which followed.

1. Accusations against the Jews in 1860

In the aftermath of the violence, Christians were asked by Fuad Paşa, the Ottoman foreign minister dispatched to Damascus, to denounce their attackers who were immediately arrested and punished without a serious judgement. These arbitrary proceedings encouraged

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[1] For a detailed account of the events see Fawaz, *An Occasion for War.*
[2] F.O., 195/601, Brant-Russell, November 8th 1860; F.O. 195/601, Brant-Bulwer, October 8th 1860.

some individuals to take advantage of the situation to settle old scores, get rid of competitors or ransom accused parties for funds. Some Christians accused Jews which led to their imprisonment. The accusations against the Jews and the difficulty with which their innocence was proven, shows a dysfunction of the extraordinary tribunal set up by Fuad Paşa to punish the guilty parties. The simple denunciation of a Christian was enough to lead to the arrest of the accused party, then the latter would be brought in front of the tribunal and the plaintiff would have to bring proofs of his allegations. However many plaintiffs did not show up so the prisoner was kept in jail until proofs could be brought.[3] These long trials were an occasion for bribes and financial exaction. The French consul even remarked that a non-eyewitness testimony was enough to get someone arrested. While foreign powers agreed to this system of arrest on simple denunciation when it came to judge Muslims, they protested that it was unfair when it came to the Jews.[4]

One month after the violence, the British consul James Brant reported that Jews were harassed by Christians who attempted to obtain money from them under threat of violence.[5] A Jewish man was blackmailed by two Christians who threatened to accuse him of having participated in the massacres unless he gave them a bribe. He had no other choice than to give them a small amount of money to save himself.[6] When Fuad Paşa left Damascus to Beirut in the winter of 1860, Jews were accused by some Christians of participating on a larger scale in the plunder and massacres of 1860. Many of them were arrested by the government in the absence of the foreign minister.[7]

The accusations and arrests of Jews involved specific Greek Catholic government employees whose actions reveal the competition between members of the two communities for administrative posts. One of the Christians behind these accusations was Ibrāhīm Karamī,

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[3] BOA, HR.SFR.3.55.21, December 22nd 1860; F.O, 195/601, Brant-Russell, November 8th 1860.
[4] A.E., CPC, 50.MD, vol. 122, Minutes of the Beirut commission, November 14th 1860.
[5] F.O., 195/601, Brant-Bulwer, July 25th 1860.
[6] F.O., 195/601, Brant-Russell, November 8th 1860.
[7] F.O., 195/601, Brant-Russell, November 8th 1860; F.O. 195/601, Brant-Bulwer, October 8th 1860.

an employee of Fuad Paşa. Ibrāhīm Karamī was the son of the secretary of Emir Bašīr Šihāb, Buṭrus Karamī, a Greek Catholic from Homs who resided in Sidon.[8] He was related to the Baḥrī family and had important positions as advisor of governors or emirs. He and his sons were thus part of the traditional Greek Catholic elite. [9]

Ibrāhīm Karamī was previously employed in the office of translation in Beirut. When the Foreign Minister Fuad Paşa arrived to Beirut after the violence of 1860, he took Ibrāhīm to Damascus and employed him as a secretary and Arabic interpreter. Fuad Paşa set out to punish the guilty parties and financially help Christians who had lost their belongings. He imposed a extraordinary tax on the Muslim population to give reparations to Christians, and he put Ibrāhīm Karamī in charge of distributing the revenue of the tax among Christians. When Fuad Paşa left, Ibrāhīm Karamī presented himself falsely as his delegate in front of the consuls, and pretended to be in charge of all the affairs of the Christians. However, according to the British consul, he soon started to take bribes to give retributions, creating discontent among Christians. The British consul accused him of embezzling a certain amount of the exemption tax, freeing prisoners on his own will, stealing the money of consuls and not listening to the governor.[10] He was also instrumental in imprisoning Jews for their alleged participation in the violence of 1860 and made sure they were not freed. He refused to accept witnesses other than Christians and thus Jews had no opportunity to defend themselves.[11] He also didn't allow Jews to have official representatives who would be present during the investigations.[12]

After Fuad Paşa returned to Damascus from Beirut in November 1860, he was called upon by the British consul James Brant who asked him to look into the matter of the

[8] Mishāqah, *Murder, Mayhem*, 108.
[9] Maẓlūm, *Nubḏa,* 288- 290; Mishāqah, *Murder, Mayhem*, 170; Farah, *Politics of Interventionism*, 118; Maẓlūm, *Nubḏa,* 288- 290; F.O. 196/601, Brant-Russel, October 8th 1860, November 8th 1860; Richard Edwards, *La Syrie 1840–1862, histoire, politique, administration, population, religion et moeurs, évènements de 1860 d'après des actes officiels et des documents authentiques* (Paris, Amyot, 1862), 251.
[10] F.O., 195/601, Brant-Russell, October 8th 1860; Wrench-Bulwer, November 5th 1860.
[11] F.O., 195/601, Brant-Russell, November 8th 1860; F.O. 195/601, Brant-Bulwer, October 8th 1860.
[12] A.E. CPC, Alexandria, Laurin-Vice Roy, May 15th 1840.

imprisoned Jews. A few days after almost all the Jews were freed. Five Jews had been kept in jail for weeks because of these accusations, and one had passed away.[13] This release points to the political power held by the British consul as well as to the intrinsic dysfunction of the tribunal. Subsequently, Ibrāhīm Karamī's accounts were examined, and he was arrested in Damascus and then sent to Beirut. In his luggage some 130 000 piasters were found[14] and in his house stolen objects and money was also discovered.[15] To be sure, he was probably not the only member of the tribunal to engage in such acts.

The accusations against the Jews in 1860 were either of direct involvement or more generally of benefiting indirectly from the violence. These accusations were present in the chronicles written by Christians. The Christian chronicler Mīḫāʾīl Mišāqa argued that the Jews had stayed safe in 1860 because they bribed the *ʿayān*.[16] Indeed, Jews were not attacked during the violence, the only Jewish house which was destroyed was the one of David Piccioto because it was located in the Christian quarter.[17] The fact that they were not bothered by the attackers, although many of them were very wealthy, made them suspicious in the eyes of some Christians who accused them of connivance with the attackers.[18] In Aleppo, during the attack of the Christian quarter in 1850, there were also rumors accusing Jews of participating in the violence.[19] However, even if Jews were not targeted by the crowd in 1860, many of them fled, including all the last members of the Karaite Jewish community who settled in Cairo or Istanbul.[20]

Mīḫāʾīl Mišāqa mentioned that only Jews benefited from the violence because Muslims had to pay a very heavy tax which ultimately was used to pay back the Jewish

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[13] F.O. 78/1520, Brant-Russell, October 11th 1860.
[14] F.O. 195/601, Wrench-Bulwer, November 5th 1860.
[15] Edwards, *La Syrie,* 251.
[16] Mishaqāh, *Murder, Mayhem*, 252.
[17] Yaron Harel, *Syrian Jewry in Transition, 1840-1880*, trans. Dena Ordan, (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2010), 176.
[18] F.O., 78/1520, Brant-Russell, 16 june 1860.
[19] Yaron Harel, "Jewish-Christian Relations in Aleppo." *IJMES* 30 (1998):89, 91.
[20] Frédéric Abécassis and Jean-François Faü, "Les Karaïtes. Une communauté cairote à l'heure de l'État-nation," *Égypte/Monde arabe*, Première Serie, 11 (1992): 4.

money-lenders what the government had borrowed from them.[21] Mišāqa also gave them a direct role in the violence by narrating that Jews were giving fresh water and lemonade to the attackers. Then, both the author of *Kitāb al-Āḥzān* and Mišāqa reported that firefighters came to turn off the fire affecting Jewish houses but not Christians'.[22]

Mišāqa then accused Jews of benefiting from the misery of Christians in the aftermath of the violence by speculating on the plundered items. He stated that the real winners of this conflict were the Jews because when Fuad Paşa ordered all stolen good to be restored, Muslims houses were searched and thus people threw the stolen objects into the streets, which were then taken by Jews. According to him, they were also able to buy expensive items at a very low price and then resell them to their owners at an exorbitant price. He also said that Muslim attackers deposited their plunder with Jews to safeguard them. The historian Baptistin Poujoulat also made such claims.[23] Then, Mišāqa mentioned that vouchers were given by the government to Christians in order to recover their stolen properties but the Christians who wanted to get money fast rather than wait until their goods were found sold these vouchers to the Jews at a lower price.[24] It is not improbable that Jews were indeed involved in reselling looted property.[25] Rabbis of the city made a declaration forbidding such a speculation on stolen items, which demonstrates that at least some Jews were involved in this trade.[26]

The author of *Kitāb al-Āḥzān* also included Jews in his accounts of the events of 1860. He narrated that the crosses that were hung on the neck of dogs right before the violence were fabricated by the Jews.[27] He also accused Jews of slaughtering Christians and taking part in the plunder.[28] He mentioned that they threw Christians who were still alive in the Baradā

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[21] Mishāqah, *Murder, Mayhem*, 263.
[22] Ibid, 252; *Kitāb al-Āḥzān*, 33.
[23] Poujoulat, *La vérité sur la Syrie*, 112; Mishāqah, *Murder, Mayhem*, 263.
[24] Mishāqah, *Murder, Mayhem*, 263.
[25] Harel, *Syrian Jewry*, 182.
[26] Ibid.
[27] *Kitāb al-Āḥzān*, 22.
[28] Ibid, 51.

river together with Muslim attackers.[29] This accusation can be seen as a reference to the prevalent anecdote which narrated that some Jews had thrown the Greek Orthodox Ecumenical Patriarch Gregory V into the Bosphorus after he was hung for allegedly supporting the Greek revolt in 1821. Mr. Spartalis, the Greek consul of Damascus also made similar accusations. He said that all the murdered Christian priests were thrown into the fire by the Jews. He also accused them of hiding many Christian children to sell them as slaves.[30] Finally, the Muslim notable ‘Abd al-Sʿūd al-Ḥasībī also accused the Jews together with Gipsies, Bedouins, Shias and Kurds of being the actors of the violence.[31]

Such accusations built on the conflictual relationships between Jews and Greek Catholics over the first part of the 19th century, which were marked by local events such as accusations of blood libels and competition for positions for power, but also by larger developments in the empire such as the Greek revolt and the beginning of proto-Zionsim. It also points to the specific relationship developed between Jewish ṣarrāf and the local government.

2. **Competition between Jews and Christians in the Administration**

2.1 Competition for Patronage in the Beginning of the 19th century

Non-Muslims were often employed in the administration of the provinces as scribes, translators and financial administrators. They spoke European languages which was an asset in the 19th century because of European consuls' interventions in the daily affairs of the provinces. These employees could play an important role in the relation between the governors and consuls but also in the policies adopted towards religious communities. They could use their influence with the governors to favor their own religious group at the expense

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[29] Ibid, 37.
[30] Baron, "The Jews", 7.
[31] Salibi, "The 1860 Upheaval", 187.

of others. Christian and Jews who had connections with influential figures in Istanbul could even be important intermediaries between governors and the Ottoman court.[32]

As Linda T. Darling argues in her study of the financial department in the 17th century, the decision-making process in the Ottoman administration should be seen as a process in which multiple actors had a say. The orders drafted in Istanbul often resulted from local initiatives through the forms of petitions. Then, the application of the orders also involved various actors in the administration and often led to prolonged negotiations with the concerned parties. Some orders were not applied at all. In this process the province and the centre were dependent on each other for information gathering and law enforcement.[33] Similarly, Marc Aymes challenges the dichotomy between center/periphery and the perception of the reforms as a top-down process. The reforms were rather a result of negotiation between the local actors and the central state.[34] Christians and Jews employed in the administration and especially the finance department had the opportunity to intervene in this process.

Christians and Jews involved in the administration sought upon the patronage of military leaders, governors and emirs, especially when they had a strong local power base.[35] If they became part of the governor's household, they were expected to show a certain level of loyalty.[36] In exchange, they could be exempted from the *ǧizya* or from other restrictions of the *ḏimma* status, by virtue of the privileges granted to them by the sultan or governor.[37]

The downside of these reciprocal relationships between elite non-Muslims and governors is that they often shared the fate of their patrons if they didn't have the wisdom to

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[32] Mishāqah, *Murder, Mayhem,* 105.
[33] Linda T. Darling, *Revenue-raising and legitimacy: Tax collection and finance administration in the Ottoman Empire, 1560-1660* (Leiden, Brill, 1996) 97, 98; See also Caesar Farah, *Decision-making and change in the Ottoman Empire* (Kirksvile*:* Thomas Jefferson University Press, 1993).
[34] Aymes, *A Provincial History,* 6.
[35] al-Dimašqī, *Tārīḫ,* 79.
[36] See for example how the governor of Acre, Cezzar Ahmed Paşa, accused his Greek Catholic secretary Ḥanā al-ʿAwra of disloyalty after finding that he wrote letters for his rival, ʿAwra, *Tārīḫ wilāyā,* 113.
[37] See for example the exemptions of clothing restrictions and *ǧizyā* for Ḥanā Baḥrī in Maẓlūm, *Nubḏa,* 319.

escape before their downfall or to contract the protection of another patron in time.[38] In these cases, the whole community could suffer from the downfall of their elite. For example, in 1795 the tax-collector of Damascus, Muḥammad Āġā Urfa Āmīnī, was fired from his position and imprisoned in the castle after one of his rivals plotted against him. His Jewish ṣarrāf[39] and advisers Yūsuf, Manahim, Rufaʾīl and Salomon Farḥī were also imprisoned. While looking for one of these ṣarrāf who had escaped, the troops ransacked the Jewish quarter and hung the butcher in front of his own door.[40]

In *Bilād al-Šām*, among the employees of the governors, two families competed for power and influence. The Greek Catholic Baḥrī and the Jewish Farḥī family alternatively obtained the most sought-upon positions in the administration. Their competition went beyond interpersonal issues and came to represent the power relation between the Jewish and Greek Catholic elite. It informed sectarian discourses presenting the relation between Christians and Jews as based upon innate enmity.[41] The most famous ṣarrāf of this period was Ḥāyīm Farḥī. He is remembered because of his great power but also because his nose and ear were mutilated by the governor Cezzar Ahmed Paşa. He has become the symbol of Cezzar's persecution of non-Muslims and barbarism. Yet, Farḥī had also reached a position of unequal power under Cezzar Ahmed Paşa and was associated with his household. Both Farḥī and Cezzar Ahmed Paşa were disliked by French businessmen and consuls for they frustrated the integration of *Bilād al-Šām* into the world market.[42] They strengthened monopolies and limited foreigners' ability to obtain land in *Bilād al-Šām*.[43] Cezzar Ahmed Paşa had a particularly conflictual relationship with the French diplomatic representatives, who resented

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[38] For example, Ibrāhīm Baḥrī was employed as the writer of the *mutassalim* of the governor in 1819, but when his patron was fired he was followed and assassinated in the streets, al-Dimašqī, *Tārīḫ ḥawādiṯ,* 158.
[39] Money changers/ Money lenders.
[40] Al-Dimašqī, *Tārīḫ ḥawādiṯ,* 79.
[41] ʿAwra, *Tārīḫ wilāyā,* 90.
[42] Henry Laurens, *L'expédition d'Egypte* (Paris: Le Seuil, 1997), 262.
[43] BOA, C.HR.159.7926, November 13th 1792.

his policies against them.[44] Foreign merchants had to escape to Jaffa to avoid the policies of Cezzar in Acre.[45] The French consuls were also particularly critical of Ḥāyīm.[46] Ḥāyīm Farḥī's popularity among the governors derived from his talents as an administrator but also on the fact that he could have access to large resources, especially through his links with bankers in Istanbul such as the Kamondo and Gabbay families. He could also obtain the appointment of his allies to the post of governor.[47] The Farḥī family benefited from their alliance with the ʿAẓm family who ruled *Bilād al-Šām* for an extensive amount of time.[48] After the death of Cezzar Ahmed Paşa, the Farḥī family found employment with the governor of Sidon Sulayman Paşa al-Adil (1805-1819).

In the beginning of the 19th century, members of the Greek Catholic Baḥrī family also shined in their influence over governors, especially the aforementioned governor of Damascus Yusuf Genç Paşa. Indeed, the Kurdish mütesellim, Yusuf Genç Paşa al Dali formed a relationship with the influential Greek Catholic ʿĀbūd Baḥrī, probably based on loans and debts. Thanks to his help, Yusuf Genc Paşa managed to make a name for himself among the *ʿayān* of Istanbul and thus to secure his appointment as the governor of Damascus in 1807.[49] Non-Muslim advisers, *ṣarrāfs* and clerks, by virtue of their widespread networks reaching Istanbul, could be tools of access for less wealthy ambitious officers who wished to be named governors. In this case, Baḥrī can be seen as the patron and Yusuf Genç as the protégé. The relationship between governors and their non-Muslim advisers was two sided and based on inter-dependency. ʿĀbūd Baḥrī got extensive power and seemed to win the

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[44] A.E., 166/PO-Serie D/20, vol. 1, Chaboceau- French Ambassador, October 12th 1796; A.E., 166/PO-Serie D/20, vol. 1, Chaboceau- French Ambassador, May 19th 1795. A.E., 166/PO-Serie D/20, vol. 1, Chaboceau- French Ambassador, July 9th 1796.

[45] A.E., 166/PO-Serie D/20, vol. 1, Chaboceau- French Ambassador, July 9th 1796.

[46] Thomas Philipp, *Acre: The Rise and Fall of a Palestinian City, 1730-1831* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001), 87; Mishāqah, *Murder, Mayhem,* 63.

[47] Such as the governor ʿAbdallah Paşa al-Azm; Ibid, 105.

[48] ʿAwra, *Tārīḫ wilāyā,* 90.

[49] al-Dimašqī, *Tārīḫ ḥawādiṯ,* 109.

competition with the Farḥī family.[50] The Farḥī family on the other hand is described as using

bribes to counter the attacks of the Baḥrī against them.[51] The two strong governors of the

southern Bilād al-Shām, Sulaymān Paşa al-ʿĀdil and Yusuf Genç Paşa entertained a

competition for power and territorial gains, matched by the competition between the Farḥī and

the Baḥrī family.[52]

   This enmity between the Baḥrī and Farḥī families was interpersonal but also came to

influence perceptions of the relationship between Greek Catholics and Jews, which can be

found in chronicles written by Christians. Both Ibrāhīm al-ʿAwra, a Greek Catholic, and

Mīḫāʾīl Mišāqa, a Greek Catholic who converted to Protestantism, wrote chronicles in this

period. They mentioned the enmity between the Greek Catholics and the Jews, albeit in

different terms.

   Ibrāhīm ʿAwra was the son of the Greek Catholic Ḥanā al-ʿAwra. He had been in the

service of al-Cezzar who had arrested and tortured him.[53] He then worked for Hāyīm Farḥī in

the service of Sulaymān Paşa, and had a good position as chief writer of the treasury.[54]

Al-ʿAwra depicted Hāyīm Farḥī as the competitor of the Greek Catholics. Some level of

resentment towards his higher position in comparison to his father is observable in his account.

But he also had good words for him, and presents him as an exception among the Jews, which

points to the otherwise bad image of Jews among Greek Catholics. He describes the

competition between Farḥī and Baḥrī as a consequence of their professional competition but

also because of the enmity between Jews and Christians in religious and mundane matters.[55]

Mišāqa on the other hand, described Hāyīm Farḥī in flattering terms, without even mentioning

that he was Jewish. He mentioned that Ḥāyīm had nothing against Greek Catholics and

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[50] ʿAwra, *Tārīḫ wilāyā,* 93.
[51] Ibid.
[52] Ibid, 63, 90, 93.
[53] Ibid, 113-144.
[54] Philipp, *Acre,* 165.
[55] ʿAwra, *Tārīḫ wilāyā,* 90.

employed them but had an issue with the Greek Catholics of Damascus who followed the Baḥrī family.[56]

Eventually, Yusuf Genc Paşa was fired for embezzlement and died in 1810.[57] His rival, Sulayman Paşa al-ʿĀdil was awarded the governorship of Damascus until 1812. He installed the Farḥī family in power in that city and sidelined the Baḥrī family who fled to Egypt.[58] The Farḥī family managed to keep the upper hand until the Egyptian rule of Damascus in 1831. The Damascene balance of power between Jewish and Greek Catholics families mirrors larger competition between Jewish and Armenian families in Istanbul, which contributed to shaping a sectarian discourse which posited Christians and Jews as enemies. While in the 16th century Jewish notables monopolized all the financial posts, in the 17th century some Armenians started to take the upper hand in the financial administration. A strong competition developed therein. Jewish money-lenders were gradually replaced by Armenians and Christians in the 18th century.[59] Yet, the famous Jewish *ṣarrāf* of the government, Ezekiel Gabbay, managed to exile important Armenian bankers, including the famous *amira[60]* Kazaz Artin, albeit temporarily. The competition between *ṣarrāf* for access to resources and patronage was presented as a question of sectarian hatred, constructing the Jewish and Christian identities in opposition to one another.[61]

The events around the Greek revolt of 1821 explain many aspects of the Christian/Jewish relationship in the following years and the development of sectarian discourses. Indeed, the birth of the nationalist movements in the Balkans was accompanied by tensions with Jews. Jews participated in the Ottoman retaliations against Greeks in northern Greece and in the plunder of villages. It led to a backlash against Jewish communities of the

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[56] Mishāqah, *Murder, Mayhem*, 54, 58.
[57] al-Dimašqī, *Tārīḫ ḥawādiṯ,* 126.
[58] Mishāqah, *Murder, Mayhem*, 70.
[59] Levy, *The Sephardim in the Ottoman Empire,* 96.
[60] Armenians notables, leaders of the community.
[61] Moise Franco, *Essai sur l'histoire des Israélites de l'Empire ottoman depuis les origines jusqu'à nos jours* (Paris : Alliance israélite universelle-Éd. du Nadir ; Gordes : la Lettre sépharade, 2007), 133.

region.[62] Then, the hanging of the Greek Orthodox Ecumenical patriarch Gregory V in Istanbul, who was accused of connivance with the rebels,[63] also created tensions between Greeks and Jews.[64] After being hanged and left in plain sight for a few days, an Ottoman representative gave the patriarch's body to three Jews to get rid of. It is unknown whether they were forced to do so or not. They threw his body into the Bosphorous.[65] This account, which circulated widely, started a rumor that the Jews had been behind the murder of the patriarch, which triggered violence against the Jewish community of Morea (Peloponnese) which led to the death of 5000 of them.[66] In Tripolis, the capital of the Peloponnese, the whole Jewish population was killed.[67] These events of violence reinforced sectarian discourses across the empire and helped politicize Christian and Jewish religious identities.

In the first part of the 19th century, important Jewish families had been dominating the imperial financial administration as bankers and *ṣarrāf.* But successive events led to their loss of power, including the execution of the Janissaries in 1826. Following this event, some Armenian money-lenders, led by Kazaz Artin, denounced the financial links between the Janissaries and the Jewish money-lenders such as Isahiah Aciman, Behor Isaac David Carmona and Ezekiel ben Joseph Gabbay. Subsequently, they were killed on account of corruption and for opposing the reforms.[68] The murder of these important *ṣarrāf* and community leaders remained in the collective memory.[69] Following these events, the financial department was only composed of Armenians. This execution marks the temporary end of Jewish influence in the administration.[70]

2.2 Egyptian Rule and Accusations of Blood Libel

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[62] Ibid.
[63] K.E. Fleming, *Greece--a Jewish History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008), 16.
[64] Shaw, *Jews in the Ottoman Empire*, 198; Franco, *Essai,* 132.
[65] Fleming, *Greece*, 16.
[66] Shaw, *Jews of Ottoman Empire,* 190; Fleming, *Greece,* 16.
[67] Ibid, 16, 17.
[68] Shaw, *Jews of the Ottoman Empire*, 148.
[69] Franco, *Essai*, 135.
[70] Shaw, *Jews of the Ottoman Empire,* 148-149.

In Damascus, the competition between the Farḥī and the Baḥrī families followed the dynamics in the imperial center. Upon the *sarraf* Ḥāyīm Farḥī 's death in 1820, his brothers succeeded him in the leadership of the community. In the 1820's, Mūsā Farḥī was the main intermediary between the state and the Jewish community. Together with his brother Ḥāyīm, he had been a *ṣarrāf* in the treasury of Sulaymān Paşa.[71] Like Ḥāyīm, he was described by a travelling rabbi as more powerful than the governor himself.[72] He was then succeeded by his brother Rufaʾīl Farḥī, who provided funds to the *āġāwāt* during the revolt of 1831, which ended with the death of the governor Salim Paşa. However, in 1831 when the Egyptians took over the city of Damascus, the balance of power shifted in favor of Greek Catholics. Ḥanā Baḥrī was awarded the post of financial administrator, which had previously been in the hands of the Farḥī family.[73] The house of the mufti of Damascus was made into Ḥanā Baḥrī's residence.[74]

In this context of Greek Catholic alliance with the Egyptian rule and of the development of sectarian discourses regarding the relation between Jews and Christians in the empire, Jews were accused of blood libel in 1840. Father Thomas, a Capucin Franciscan priest of French citizenship, disappeared together with his assistant Ibrāhīm ʿAmāra after visiting the Jewish neighborhood of Damascus around Passover. The French consul Benoit Ulysse de Ratti-Menton accused the Jews of his murder and argued that it was committed for religious purposes related to Passover. In retribution, the governor Şerif Paşa, under the Egyptian rule, arrested eight Jewish notables and tortured them. Among them were members of the leading Harārī and Farḥī family. The event took an international dimension when the Austrian consul in Aleppo called upon the international community to intervene. Jewish

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[71] ʿAwra, *Tārīḫ wilāyā,* 160.
[72] Fischel, *Unknown Jews,* 66, 67.
[73] *Muḏakkirāt tārīḫīya, 59.*
[74] Ḫālid Banī Hānī, *Tārīḫ Dimašq wa ʿulamāʾuhā ḫilāl al- ḥukm al-Misʿrī, 1831-1840* (Damas, Dār Safahʾāt, 2007), 157.

communities in many countries were outraged by the event and called on their government to interfere for the release of the prisoners. Eventually the prisoners were released.[75] The arrest or execution of some of the important members of their community during the blood libel curtailed further the power of the Jews in the city, already threatened by the Egyptian rule.[76] It also marked the involvement of the international community in the affairs of the Jewish community of the city, creating a sense of commonness with European Jewry. It contributed a heightened confessional consciousness of Damascene Jews.

Accusations of blood libels, originating in medieval Europe, were not a new occurrence and had already taken place under previous sultans. These accusations were countered by various orders from the sultans forbidding such libels. Jewish lay leaders in the 16th and 17th centuries had been in charge of repressing them as well.[77] The blood libel incident of Damascus in 1840 triggered such an international response that it is often singled out. Yet it is not the only accusation of blood libel that occurred in the Ottoman lands in this period and rather is part of a larger dynamic of inter-confessional tensions and anti-semitism. In the same year, another accusation of blood libel took place in Rhodes. On the background of an economic and commercial competition between Christians and Jews in the city,[78] a Jewish sponge merchant, newcomer to the city, was seen as a threat to the other sponge merchants. As a consequence, they accused him of a blood libel. He was arrested and under torture, admitted the charge. The *mutaṣarrif* of the city thus condemned him and another nine

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[75] Jonathan Frankel, "'Ritual Murder' In the Modern Era: The Damascus Affair of 1840," *Jewish Social Studies* 3, no. 2 (1997): 8-10.

[76] For a description of the accusation of blood libel, see Jonathan Frankel, *The Damascus Affair* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).

[77] Bornstein-Makovetsky, "Jewish Lay Leadership", 96.

[78] Mary Margaroni, "The Blood Libel on Greek Islands in the Nineteenth Century," in: R. Nemes & D. Unowsky (eds), *Sites of European Antisemitism in the Age of Mass Politics, 1880-1918* (Hanover & London: University Press of New England, 2014), 182-183.

Jews as well as the grand rabbi. However, when the central government heard about this event, it freed the Jews and fired the *mutaṣarrif*.[79]

The accusations of blood libel were believed by a large part of the population. Arabic chronicles are valuable sources of information regarding the persistence of this belief and the proofs used to sustain it. Ibrāhīm ʿAwra in his chronicle used very harsh words against the Jews in general, and claimed that the Talmud allows them to kill and steal from non-Jews. He also accused them of claiming for themselves the kingship on earth awarded to them by God, which allows them to hurt people and take things from them on the account that they are to inherit everything on earth. ʿAwra claimed that, on the contrary, they were cursed by the Prophets and that their prayers were not accepted.[80] He wrote his chronicle after the blood libel of 1840 between 1848 and 1853. The citation of proofs from the Talmud of the legality of killing non-Jews was current after 1840 because during the accusation of blood libel a converted Jew had shown the Talmud to the governor and explained that it contained such verses. The French consul of Alexandria also sent to his superiors an interpretation of the Talmud in which it is stated that Jews had a religious duty to take the wealth of Christians and to curse them three times a day. According to the French consul, while they should remain neutral to Muslims, Jews should do everything to destroy Christians, including destroying their places of worship.[81] ʿAwra thus presented the religious beliefs of Jews a threat to Christians, participating in the construction of a sectarian discourse in Damascus.

On the other hand, Mīḫāʾīl Mišāqa stated that the Talmud had to be respected because of the detailed religious discussions that it contains. Yet, he mentioned that Jews treat gentiles differently than they treat each other.[82] Mišāqa also refuted the accusations of blood libel by

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[79] Julia Cohen and Sarah Stein, *Sephardi Lives: A Documentary History, 1700-1950* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2014), 109- 115; Margaroni, " The Blood Libel", 184.

[80] ʿAwra, *Tārīḫ wilāyā,* 90.
[81] A.E. CPC, Alexandria, Consul Alexandria-Consul Damascus, August 30th 1840.
[82] Mishāqah, *Murder, Mayhem*, 197.

saying that the Talmud forbids Jews to drink blood, and thus inferred that they could obviously not drink human blood for Passover.[83] This exact argument is found in the *ferman* promulgated in 1840 by the sultan in order to forbid accusations of blood libels. The *ferman* stated that after an exploration of Jewish holy books by Muslim ulema it was found that the accusations could only be slanderous because Jews were forbidden from eating both animal and human blood.[84]

Mišāqa, narrating the events of 1840, stated that the Jewish notable Harārī's servant simply killed Father Thomas out of greed. The involvement of the Jewish community to defend him was counterproductive in his eyes. Yet, Mišāqa, in his medical capacity, was called upon by the government to identify the belongings of Father Tomas and the human bones found in a river near the Jewish neighborhood.[85] He concluded that it was undeniably the belongings of Father Thomas and that the bones were indeed human bones, leaving no doubt that Father Thomas was murdered.[86] Mišāqa was thus instrumental in the accusations brought against the Jews, even if he did not believe in the religious motive of the blood libel. He did provide another discourse which emphasized coexistence rather than deep-rooted antagonism between the two communities. The two chronicler represent two different groups of Greek Catholics of the city. While Mišāqa was involved in trade and took advantage of foreign protection to increase his socioeconomic and political position, ʿAwra rather belongs to the old elite, whose influence declined in the first part of the 19th century.

In 1840, the French consul Ratti-Menton and his agent Jean-Baptiste Beaudin were convinced of the guilt of the Jews in this murder. They were instrumental in convincing the Ottoman government of their guilt.[87] In France, while the Jewish community was mobilized to free their coreligionists, various newspapers engaged in an anti-Jewish campaign and

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[83] Ibid.
[84] Shaw, *Jews of Ottoman Empire*, 200.
[85] Mishāqah, *Murder, Mayhem*, 199.
[86] Ibid, 199, 200, 197.
[87] Frankel, *Damascus Affair*, 58.

revived the accusations of blood libels. The development of the press in the 19th century favored the diffusion of such accusations to a wider international audience. Rina Cohen sees in the discourses against the Jews during the affair of Damascus a prelude to modern antisemitism and to the Dreyfus Affair which was to take place some fifty years later.[88]

The French consuls of the city had always been quite critical of the Jews and especially of the Farḥī family.[89] The credit given to blood libels among the population was influenced by the circulation of written material. For example, French consuls in Alexandria and Damascus apparently spread stories of blood libels in these cities, which intended to instill fear among the population.[90] As in the case of the relation between Muslim and Christians, and in the divisions between the Greek Catholics in the affair of the calendar, the press was used to diffuse sectarian discourses, polarizing the population along religious lines.

Greek Catholics, close to France, tended to side with the French consul. However, some of them opposed the consul. There was a division among Greek Catholics between a pro-French and a pro-British/Austrian faction. Indeed, the Austrian consul Caspar Merlatto defended the Jews and proclaimed their innocence to his superiors and the Egyptian authorities.[91] The British consul Werry initially circulated the reports of the French consul Ratti-Menton giving credit to the accusations of blood libel. When Lord Palmerston, his foreign minister, heard the news, he sent a reprimand to his consul who then turned to defend the Jews.[92] Greek Catholics who were employed or benefited from the protection of the Austrian consul were very critical of the French consul's actions and took the side of the Jews. The most prominent members of this group were the aforementioned Yūsuf ʿAyrūṭ and Ḥanā Frayǧ which we encountered as main actors in the divisions of the Greek Catholic Church.

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[88] Rina Cohen, "L'affaire de Damas et les prémices de l'antisémitisme moderne," *Archives Juives* 34, no. 1, (2001): 120.
[89] Philipp, *Acre*, 87; Mishāqah, *Murder, Mayhem*, 63.
[90] Shaw, *Jews of the Ottoman Empire,* 199.
[91] Cohen, "L'affaire de Damas," 160.
[92] Alan Dundes, *The Blood Libel Legend: A Casebook in Anti-Semitic Folklore* (University of Wisconsin Press, 1991), 141.

They were both very close to the Austrian consul Merlatto.[93] ʿAyrūṭ was also employed in the provincial administration. The French consul Ratti-Menton was angered by Frayǧ and ʿAyrūṭ's opposition. He ordered to search Yūsuf ʿAyrūṭ house's to look for the Jews allegedly involved in the murder of Father Thomas.[94] The animosity between these two individuals and the French consul continued with his successors, who accuse them of threatening French influence in the city.[95]

In Damascus, prominent Jews were also found in the employment of consul or agent of Austria and Prussia. For example, Hillel Piccioto, the nephew of Elija de Piccioto, consul of Aleppo, was the Prussian consul in Damascus until 1846. Yūsuf Ilyās was the consular representative of Austria in 1839 and then his official agent in 1847. He also had a British citizenship.[96] The Angel, Farḥī and Lisbona families had Austrian protection from early on. The Romanov, Ḥakīm and Matalon families were Prussian protégés.[97] Similary to Yūsuf ʿAyrūṭ and Ḥanā Frayǧ they were often involved in trade.[98]

The new Greek Catholic commercial elite had various partnerships with Jews. The opponents of the patriarch from among the Greek Catholics, and especially their leader Ḥanā Frayǧ, had close relations with the Jews, not only because of their closeness to the Austrian consul during the events of 1840, but also because of commercial ties. Indeed Ḥanā Frayǧ was close to the Jewish merchants who had British protection, they often signed petitions together. Frayǧ did not belong to the established notable Greek Catholic families of Damascus such as the Baḥrī family. He built his fortune in the 19th century which brought him closer to other Jews involved in trade. Yet, in Damascus in the beginning of the 19th century there were distinctions in the commercial strategies of Christians and Jewish merchants. Christians

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[93] Frankel, *Damascus affair*, 97.
[94] A.E., CPC, Alexandria, French Consul-Thiers, April 24Th 1840.
[95] A.E. 67/CPC, vol. 1, Baron de Bourquency-Guizot, February 3rd 1842.
[96] Harel, *Syrian Jewry*, 203, 210.
[97] Ibid, 214.
[98] Ibid, 204.

involved in trade usually represented foreign companies while Jews were autonomous merchants.[99]

This period was characterized by some commercial alliances contracted across religious groups. Indeed, these Jews and Greek Catholics came to form an elite who was close to foreign powers and benefited from their entrance in the region's economy. These commercial alliances also had political consequences. This development is visible in the chronicles written in this period, which differ from former literature. These authors developed a similar world view beyond their religious groups, and identified more and more with the unit of Syria.[100] The fact that these heightened inter-confessional tensions occurred in a period of more social interactions across religious groups and commercial cooperation among a certain part of the Jewish and Christian population, who also benefited from foreign statuses, points to a certain fear of the fading of borders between communities. It is indeed in periods of increasing social mixture and interaction that community leaders usually attempt to reinforce social divisions.[101]

After the return of Ottoman rule to Damascus, relations between Jews and Greek Catholics close to France were tense. France, which had supported Muḥammad ʿAlī, lost its influence in the empire, which affected negatively Catholics. The Baḥrī family, associated with the Egyptians, fell in disfavor.[102] After the return of Ottoman rule, Rūfāʾīl Farḥī was initially reinstated in his position of *ṣarrāf*, and assumed a dominant role in the financial administration. He was able to replace some Greek Catholic employees with Jews.[103] He came to represent the community and had extensive powers in the city and powerful relations

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[99] F.O., 195/601, Brant-Bulwer, December 18th 1858.

[100]Thomas Philipp, "Class, Community, and Arab Historiography in the Early Nineteenth Century. The Dawn of a New Era." *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 16, no. 2 (1984): 163.

[101] Karen Barkey, *Empire of Difference. The Ottomans in Comparative Perspective* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2008), 119.

[102] Harel, *Syrian Jewry,* 119.

[103] F.O., 78 /447, Werry-Palmeston, August 21st 1841.

in Istanbul.[104] In addition, the balance of power between foreign consuls tilted in favour of Great Britain, who had participated in the Ottoman recovery of the region. Its preeminence also benefited some Jewish merchants who were increasingly placing themselves under British protection after the blood libel of 1840. [105]

After the Egyptian retreat from Syria, the different powers attempted to take advantage of the political confusion to create zones of interests. While in the case of France and Russia it naturally passed through the protection of Maronites and Greek Orthodox, in the case of the British it was more versatile. After failed attempts at gaining the loyalty of Maronites of Mount Lebanon, Great Britain saw more fitting to use Jews as a gateway to Syria. Already in 1838 missionaries had bought land on the Mount Sinaï in Jerusalem to build a church and named a British consul to Jerusalem. Then, the Anglo-Prussian bishopric was created in Jerusalem in 1842, and the converted Jew Michael Alexander was named bishop.[106]

The different British decision-makers, be it consuls, missionaries or parliament members, considered this policy towards the Jews as beneficial, but they all had different objectives. For some, it was just a pragmatic goal to increase the influence of Great Britain or reinforce the sovereignty of the Ottoman Empire in front of Egypt. For others, such as the British politician Lord Ashley, it was rather part of an ideological/religious plan of settlement of Jews in Palestine. Publications circulating in this period, such as 'Memorandum to Protestant Monarchs of Europe for the restoration of the Jews to Palestine' called for programs of settlement of Palestine by Jews in order to fulfil Protestant Zionist beliefs, together with offering a gateway to Britain in order to carve out a sphere of influence in *Bilād al-Šām*. It was also an opportunity to give a space to Great Britain for the development of its

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[104] A.E., ADP/75, vol. 4, Ratti Menton-Thiers, April 17th 1840.
[105] F.O., 78 /447, Werry-Palmeston, August 21st 1841.
[106] Joseph Hajjar, *L' Europe et les destinées du Proche-Orient,* Bibliothèque de l'histoire de l'église, (Paris: Bloud et Gay, 1970), 324, 332.

growing economy.[107] Some supported this policy with the view to internationalize Palestine.[108] Finally, Montefiore argued that it would allow Jews to live free of restrictions over the practice of their religion, which was impossible in Great Britain.[109] The aforementioned Lord Ashley was convinced of the necessity to settle Jews in Palestine under the protection of Great Britain. He was not alone in this mindset, for soon the newspaper *The Times* presented a narrative which attributed to Jews the right to settle in their 'homeland'.[110] There was thus in Great Britain a general understanding of the necessity of settling Jews in Palestine both to foster British influence and for religious reasons.[111]

Jews in Damascus took advantage of this new interest of British decision-makers towards Jews. However, even with the support of the British consul, the centralization policies of the Ottoman government threatened the position of the Farḥī family. Indeed, with the arrival of the *defterdar* sent by the central government, Rūfāʾīl had to resign.[112] When the provisional governor Ali Paşa arrived in February 1841,[113] he was welcomed by a procession organized by the Jews who hoped to recover their former status. However he did not favor them and instead divided the public offices among the different religious groups, thus curtailing the influence of the Farḥī family. The following governor, Necip Paşa, who arrived in April 1841,[114] was accompanied by his own employees, including a Jewish and an Armenian ṣarrāf, who were ordered to take care of the finances of the region.[115] The central government was in the process of centralizing the fiscal administration of the provinces, as

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[107] Hajjar, *L'Europe*, 327.
[108] Ibid, 323.
[109] Ibid, 330.
[110] Ibid, 329.
[111] Ibid, 330.
[112] Ibid, 120.
[113] F.O., 78/447, Werry Ponsonby, February 4th 1841.
[114] F.O., 78/447, Werry-Posonby, March 22nd 1841.
[115] F.O., 78 /447, Werry Palmestone, August 21st 1841.

part of the *Tanzimat* reforms, sidelining traditional intermediaries. Rufaʾīl Farḥī complained about his replacement and did all that he could to remain in power.[116]

In this period, Jews were accused of mistreating Christians.[117] There were even claims that they attacked Algerians because of their French protégé status.[118] Christians petitioned the authorities in order to protect them from the Jews.[119] The discourse of persecution was increasingly used as a way to obtain resources, not only from foreign charity networks but from the Ottoman State itself. Colonel Charles Henry Churchill confirmed this tense relationship as he mentioned that Jews had more complaints against Christians than against Muslims.[120] In this context of change in the balance of power, accusations of blood libels continued to occur in Damascus in the following years.[121] These accusations often took place when the balance of power between Jewish and Christian money-lenders and advisors in the provincial administration shifted. It points to the instrumentalization of blood libels as tool of delegitimization in political and economic competition between elites.

A series of accusations of blood libels took place in 1847. In March, a Muslim went missing in the city and the Christians reported to the authorities that the Jews killed him. He was later found, and it was discovered that his disappearance was caused by an extra-conjugal affair. Later in April, a young Christian man from Baalbek who worked for a French protégé disappeared in the market of the Christian quarter of Damascus. At the request of the boy's employers, Beaudin, the French agent in charge of the consulate who had already been instrumental in the accusation of blood libel of 1840, sent a letter to the governor asking for an investigation stating that the Jews have already been suspected of such crimes beforehand.[122] Beaudin even informed the governor that the Jewish practice of stealing

[116] Ibid.
[117] F.O, 78/447, Werry-Palmestone, August 21st 1841.
[118] A.E., CPC Alexandria., Mourad Ali- French consul, April 24th 1840.
[119] F.O, 78/447, Werry-Palmestone, August 21st 1841.
[120] F.O., 226/72, Damascus: Colonel Churchill on the state of the Country, 1841.
[121] Ibid.
[122] F.O., 195/291, Timoni-Wellesley, April 28Th 1847.

children had increased.[123] The governor thus called the chiefs of the Jewish quarter of Damascus, who were shocked to be again under suspicion of this type of crime.[124] These accusations furthered the increasing political involvement of British Jews on behalf of their Damascene coreligionists, both contributing to British interventionism in the region and to the politicization of the Jewish Damascene community. In September 1847, the Jewish British Philanthropist Moses Montefiore went to Paris and met with Foreign Minister François Guizot and the King Louis Philippe I showing them the letter that Beaudin had addressed to the governor. They both ensured Montefiore that their agent's actions were not in accordance to their wishes. They told him that Jews should be protected by the French consulate just as Christians were.[125]

However, a month later another accusation of blood libel occurred. A dispute between a Jewish peddler of used clothes and a Muslim from Maydān took place. The former called two soldiers to arrest the Muslim who had attacked him but the latter accused the Jewish peddler of stealing a baby by putting him in his bag while he had entered the house to sell old clothes. The mother testified that she saw the crime from her window. Another fight occurred and both parties were brought to the seraglio. On their way, some passers-by who learned of the dispute insulted the Jewish man. A crowd composed of Muslims and Christians was formed, and they attacked random Jews in the streets. British and Prussian Jewish protégés were scared to go in the streets for fear of being attacked.[126] The fact that the accusations focused on the profession of antiquarian is not a surprise. In various accusations of blood libels which took place during the first part of the 19th century, the accusations fell on antiquarians or sellers of second hand objects, which was an occupation dominated by Jews. In 1860 it was again the sellers of second hand objects which were accused of taking

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[123] A.E., 67/CPC, vol. 3, 4, Beaudin-Safveti Pasha, April 22nd 1847.
[124] F.O., 195/291, Timoni-Wellesley, April 28th 1847.
[125] F.O., 195/291, Timony-Cowley, September 1st 1847.
[126] F.O., 195/291, Timoni- Wellesley, May 19th 1847.

advantage of the massacre to enrich themselves. As demonstrated by these events, accusations of blood libels contributed to popular mobilization and violence in the public sphere between members of both communities.

The Jewish leadership asked the British consul for help in this affair. He called upon the governor asking him to protect the Jews. The governor called the involved parties and asked the Muslim man and his relatives to testify to the crime. When the Muslim and his relatives obliged, the governor accused them of lying and sent four of them to be taken as soldiers. The rioters who had attacked Jews in the streets, including Christians, were arrested. Then, soldiers were sent to protect the Jewish quarter. It was announced publicly that anyone who slandered the Jews or bothered them would be punished.[127] Safveti Paşa, the governor, told the British consul that Muslims considered that he had betrayed them in the way he dealt with this issue by siding with the Jews.[128] The blood libel accusation, which was previously predominantly supported by the French consuls and Christians, had thus also entered the imagination of Muslims inhabitants of Damascus because of the publicity given to the affair in 1840.[129]

In 1847, various accusations of blood libels took place in other parts of *Bilād al-Šām*. For example, in Dayr al-Qamar, composed of Maronites, Greek Catholics, Druzes and Jews, the latter were accused of committing ritual murders in 1847 and 1849, which led to a pillage of their shops and residences.[130] In Jerusalem, a skirmish between a Greek and Jewish boy during pilgrimage season led to a public agitation and ended in an accusation of blood libel against the Jewish boy. Then, the grand rabbi of the city was accused of the murder of a Muslim man.[131]

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[127] Ibid.
[128] F.O., 196/291, Timony-Wellesley, May 29th 1847.
[129] Shaw, *Jews of the Ottoman Empire*, 202.
[130] Ibid, 202.
[131] James Finn and Elizabeth Anne McCaul Finn, *Stirring Times: Or, Records From Jerusalem Consular Chronicles of 1853 to 1856* (London: C. K. Paul & Co., 1878), 107-115.

The multiplication of accusations of blood libels turned them into effective tools of delegitimization of Jewish Damascenes used in cases of interpersonal disputes. For example, in 1850 during Ramadan, three Jews were arrested for mistreating a Muslim man. According to one version of the story, related by the French consul, they did so with the purpose of doing a religious sacrifice.[132] The British consul presented another version, in which the Muslim man was a thief who had repeatedly robbed the house of Mr. Romanov, a Jew under Prussian protection. One night, together with two of his neighbors he managed to catch the thief. However when the police arrived to his house, one of the guards accused Mr. Romanov and his neighbors of attempting to murder him in order to use his blood for a religious ritual.[133] They were arrested and punished by lashes in the absence of the governor Mehmed Said Damad Paşa. Mr. Romanov's foreign protection did not exempt him from the authorities' punishment. On the contrary, upon presenting his *tezkere* as a proof of his protégé status, his punishment was apparently doubled.[134] This reaction from the part of the *kahiya* Hassan Effendi can be understood by looking at the affair of the Prussian and Austrian conscripts which occurred right before this event. Indeed, the military reinforcements arriving from Beirut contained Prussian and Austrian subjects who then claimed to have been recruited by force at Varna and Bucarest and forced to convert.[135] They escaped and took refuge in the Austrian and Prussian consulate, leading to a diplomatic conflict with the Ottoman governor.[136] The dispute with Romanov took place just after this diplomatic issue, which might explain the harsh treatment he received as a Prussian protégé. Romanov died soon after his arrest, but not from the wounds of the lashes.[137] Indeed, after being freed from jail, he asked to be cured by a native barber who actually infected him with tetanus. Because of this

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[132] A.E., 166/PO-Serie D/20,vol. 3, Valbergy-French Minister in Istanbul, August 18th 1850.
[133] F.O, 195/291, Calvert- Canning, August 28th 1850.
[134] A.E., 166/PO-Serie D/20, vol. 3, Valbergy-French Minister in Istanbul, August 18Th 1850 .
[135] A.E., 166/PO-Serie D/20,vol. 3, Valbergy-French Minister in Istanbul, July 25th 1850.
[136] F.O, 195/291, Calvert-Canning, July 31st 1850.
[137] F.O, 195/291, Calvert-Canning, September 7th 1850.

death and the intervention of the Prussian consul, the governor Mehmed Said Damad, was demoted.[138]

Accusations of blood libels contributed to the confessionalization of Jews and Greek Catholics in Damascus. There were part of the wider development of sectarian narratives presenting Christians and Jews as enemies. While these discourses were fostered by events in the imperial scale, they were reinforced in Damascus by the competition between the Jewish Farḥī and the Greek Catholic Baḥrī family in the provincial administration. The accusations of blood libel also point to the increasing influence of consuls, not only in political terms but also in shaping perceptions of in and out-groups among Damascenes.

3. Crimean War, Money-lending and Accusations of Blood Libels

In the aftermath of the violence in 1860, Jews of Damascus were accused of connivance with the government and irregular troops leaders who were engaged in the violence. These accusations are related to the money-lending activities of the Jewish elite. In Aleppo, the Piccioto family was also the target of resentment for the money-lending activities of its members. Popular rumors held that the Jewish foreign consuls owned their fortunes and positions to dishonest financial activities based on speculation and debt enhancement done in cooperation either with the governor or the *maǧlis* members.[139]

In 1860, some Jewish ṣarrāfs were accused of connivance with Ahmed Paşa, the governor of Damascus, because of their financial relationships. Fuad Paşa strengthened the rumor which stated that Jews held a great amount of the governor Ahmed Paşa's fortune and that Jacob Levy, a merchant who had British nationality, had given Ahmed Paşa bills on Istanbul. He was accused of lending him money personally and thus of having a great influence over him. However, the British consul Brant denied these accusations as senseless. He talked to Jacob Levy who denied all the charges, and he explained that he had good

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[138] A.E. 67/CPC, vol. 2, Vallegue-de la Hitte, September 6th 1850 and August 18th 1850; al-Usṭwānī, *Mašāhid*, 580; BOA, I.MVL.212.6956, June 9Th 1851.

[139] Harel, *Syrian Jewry*, 230.

relations with Ahmed Paşa solely because he lent money for the treasury.[140] Interestingly, while the influence of some Greek Catholics on the governor of Damascus under Egyptian rule had led to resentments on the part of the Muslim population, the influence of some Jewish money-lenders on the governors also led to tensions with Christians, revealing the perception of a zero-sum game, in which the political influence of a member of one community meant a loss for other groups.

The accusations of closeness with the governor were related to the financial role of Jews. They were particularly called upon by the government for loans.[141] The government was not balancing its incomes and spending, mostly because of bad management, economic issues and because of the costs of conducting the pilgrimage to Mecca which fell upon the governor of Damascus.[142] Borrowing from rich Damascenes, be it Jews, Christians or Muslims was an easy way to get access to funds, and since the governors didn't stay long, they could not be forced to repay, leaving their successors to deal with the problem. The *defterdarlar* were often accused of corruption and fired from their office, which was a convenient way not to refund loans.[143] In Egypt, there were very few Muslim money-lenders and thus this activity was monopolized by Jews and Copts.[144] In areas where Muslim money-lending institutions developed, Jews played a less important role in that sector, while in areas such as *Bilād al-Šām*, where money-lending was not institutionalized, Jews stepped in.[145]

The figure of the Jewish banker who takes loans with exorbitant interests forms an integral part of European antisemitism. However, while Jews were singled out in these accusations, in *Bilād al-Šām*, Muslims, Christians and Jews were all involved in

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[140] F.O, 195/601, Brant-Russel, November 8th 1860.
[141] A.E., CCC, vol. 1, Ratti-Menton-Marechal Soult, March 4th 1842.
[142] A.E., 166/PO-Serie D/20, vol. 3,Lalberg-Minister of France in Istanbul, March 27th 1850; F.O, Wood-Canning, July 25th 1849.
[143] A.E., 189/PO, vol. 9, Outrey-Thouvenel, February 12th 1857; BOA, I.MMS.20.887, January 26th 1861.
[144] Gerber, *Crossing Borders,* 155.
[145] Ibid, 155.

money-lending with interests. They had to wait until the second part of the 19th century for the establishment of the Ottoman bank. The whole system of tax-collection was based on loans with interests in which were engaged all segments of Ottoman society, both foreigners and Ottoman subjects.

Then, in addition to connivance with the governor, Jews were accused of being close to the *āġāwāt* who had a role to play in the violence. These accusations can be explained by the fact that loans were contracted by the state from Jewish *ṣarrāf* to pay for the salary of military and paramilitary officials. The army had years of arrears of payment and thus the government was under the threat of mutiny. When the governors would receive the orders to pay the soldiers, if they did not have the funds in the treasury, which was quite common in this period, they would borrow from a *ṣarrāf* who would pay in one lump. The governor was then indebted to the *ṣarrāf*.[146]

A loan mentioned in the Ottoman archives sheds light on the technicalities of money-lending. It is mentioned that in April 1857, an order from Istanbul arrived for the payment by the treasury of the loan of three Jewish merchants under Austrian protection by the name of David Piccioto,[147] Yasef Kazci and Lazar. A closer examination of these orders shows that a part of these loans had been used to pay the salaries of the imperial army and other *yuzbaşılar* or emirs (Saʿīd Āġā and Ḥassan Šamdīn Āġā for Piccioto, Emir ʿAssāf and Malḥam Āġā for Kazcin). In the same documents, a loan given by Āzār Šamāya includes, in addition to the payment of waqf and *timar* taxes, the salary of Sulaymān Āġā Ḥarfūš and Daʿas Āġā, both guilty of violence against Christians in 1860.[148] Loans were not only made to the government but also directly to *āġāwāt* to pay for their troops and expenses.[149] The fact that most of these loans concerns the salary of irregular troops leaders is noteworthy. Indeed it

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[146] Gerber, *Crossing Borders,* 141.
[147] Harel, *Jewish-Christians*, 81.
[148] BOA, HR.MKT.186.46, April 13th 1857.
[149] BOA, A.MKT.DV 199/75 August 24th 1861.

created a relationship of dependency between the debtors and lenders.[150] It was used as a proof of their connivance with the attackers.

The link between the Jewish ṣarrāf and the military is clear in these loans. Jews represented the main pool of resource for the salaries of the military. This was the case in most of the Ottoman Empire.[151] In the case of the Jews of Damascus, the fact that important members of the community were involved in money-lending which ensured the payment of the regular and irregular troops, actually bought the safety of the community during the events of 1860.

Accusations of connivance with the government were strengthened by the new role of Jewish ṣarrāf in Istanbul after the Crimean War which allowed them to recover their dominant position lost after the abolition of the Janissaries. The Ottoman government borrowed extensively from abroad and from bankers in the years after the Crimean War. After the war, foreign banking companies were introduced in the empire. Local ṣarrāf also set up their own local banks.[152] In 1856, the French consul remarked the proliferation of houses of commerce which changed currencies.[153] While the government had already borrowed important sums before the war, it found a new stratagem to have access to more funds, which was to issue bonds with very high interest rates. Jewish bankers of Damascus principally took advantage of the opportunity and bought these bonds in mass.[154]

Together with the development of external debt, the government relied on loans from Abraham Salomon Kamondo.[155] Kamondo was an important Jewish banker who survived the elimination of the Jewish elite in 1826. He inherited the bank created by his brother with

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[150] F.O, 195/458, Wood-Redcliffe, May 13th 1857.

[151] Gerber, *Crossing Borders,* 91.

[152] Joseph Glass and Ruth Kark, S*ephardic Entrepreneurs and the Valero Family in Eretz-Israel during the 19th and 20th Centuries* (Jerusalem: Gefen Publishing House, 2013), 88; On this topic see Philip L. Cottrell, Monika Pohle Fraser and Iain L. Fraser, eds., *East Meets West: Banking, Commerce and Investment in the Ottoman Empire* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008).

[153] A.E., 189/PO, vol. 9, Outrey-Thouvenel, March 7th 1856, April 7th 1856.

[154] Yaron Harel, *Zionism in Damascus, Ideology and Activity in the Jewish Community at the Beginning of the Twentieth Century*, trans. D. Gershon (London: I.B. Tauris, 2015), 2.

[155] Ipek, *Selanik ve İstanbul,* 248.

branches in Vienna, Paris and London.[156] He is referred to as the 'Rothschild of the East'. He held Austrian citizenship and was the first foreigner to legally hold real-estate in Istanbul.[157] His bank financed the British and French army operations during the Crimean War. Then, after the war, he benefited from the full protection of Reşid Paşa, the Sadrazam Ali Paşa and the finance minister Fuad Paşa.[158] Kamondo was indeed the personal *şarrāf* of Fuad Paşa.[159] This protection also allowed Jews to gain access to more positions in the Ottoman financial administration.[160]

The loans made from Jewish bankers in Istanbul after the Crimean War marked their return on the front scene of the Ottoman financial administration. In Damascus, this change in the power balance translated in a new bargaining power for Jewish *şarrāf* in front of the local treasury. From the time of the Crimean War, Jews easily obtained orders of payment from Istanbul for the loans they had given to the local government.[161] The new reliance of the government on Jewish bankers to ensure the day to day functioning of the local administration created resentment from Christians which are reflected in the accusations of 1860. Already during the accusation of blood libel in 1840, some Christians considered that the imprisoned Jews had been freed from jail as a consequence of their influence on the government, not because of their innocence.[162]

In Damascus, this change of influence is also observable. In 1855 and 1856, a *ferman* arrived to the *defterdar* and governor of Damascus to facilitate the work of the banker ʿAzrā Šamāya.[163] Šamāya functioned as an agent of Kamondo in Damascus.[164] He apparently rendered great services to the government for he received on November 18th 1857 ancient

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[156] Shaw, *Jews of the Ottoman Empire,* 160.
[157] Shaw, "Ottoman Tax Reform," 109.
[158] Shaw, *Jews of the Ottoman Empire,* 160.
[159] Ipek, *Selanik ve Istanbul*, 248
[160] Shaw, *Jews of the Ottoman Empire*, 160.
[161] FO.195/458, Misk-Redcliffe, May 13th 1857.
[162] Harel, "Jewish-Christian", 82.
[163] BOA, A.MKT.UM.216.84, November 26th 1855; BOA, A.MKT.UM.177.33, January 8th 1855.
[164] Lütfi Efendi, *Vak'a-nüvis Ahmed Lütfi Efendi Tarihi,* Abridged by Münir Aktepe, vol.10 (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1988), 18.

Islamic coins and a very valuable box. He was awarded in 1858 a *Mecdiye Nişan* of the 5th level for his good service, especially for his help in meeting the expenses of the pilgrimage through his loans.[165] He became an important notable of the city and his son used his influence to protect the Jews during the violence of 1860 by obtaining guards sent by the governor.[166]

In this context of a changing power balance after the Crimean War, Damascene Jews were again subjected to an accusation of blood libel in Damascus. In June 1856, inhabitants of the Maydān accused again a Jewish antiquarian of stealing a baby and putting him in his bag. He was dragged by a crowd of inhabitants from the Maydān to the governor Mahmud Paşa, and on their way they harassed other Jews. The British acting-consul Mr. Misk complained to the Paşa, who arrested all those who insulted or hurt the Jews. He also sent soldiers to guard the Jewish neighborhood. In this affair the Jews protected by Britain feared an attack but none of them was bothered.[167] The accusation of blood libel corresponded to the time of Aid, just as the attacks against the Christian quarter in 1860.[168] It was a time prone to conflict as the city flowed with strangers and the police was overwhelmed. A month later a *ferman* was published to forbid the accusations of blood libels against the Jews in Damascus.[169]

Again in the same year, an argument took place in the Maydān between a Greek Catholic man and the son of the Jewish grand rabbi Aaron Jacob. The former publicly insulted the Jewish religion and accused them of committing murders for religious rituals. The Jews were so fed up with this issue that they wanted to send an envoy to Istanbul to obtain again an official condemnation of these accusations. The governor Mahmud Paşa brought the case to the tribunal of investigation, but one of its members, probably the Greek Catholic Ǧibrān

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[165] BOA, A.DVN.133.40. August 9th 1858; BOA, I.DH.409.27103, July 13th 1858; BOA, A.AMD.81.55, November 20th 1857; BOA, A.MKT.MHM.758.46, July 31st 1858.
[166] Franco, *Essai,* 210.
[167] FO.195/458, Misk-Redcliffe, July 29th 1856.
[168] FO.195/458, Misk-Redcliffe, June 9th 1856.
[169] BOA, HR.MKT.16.6 August 24th 1856; HR.MKT.156.6 August 24th 1856.

Baḥrī who represented Catholics, interfered against the Jews.[170] After the intervention of the British vice-consul, the Greek Catholic man was imprisoned. The Greek Catholic patriarch promised that he would warn his flock during the mass against accusations of blood libels. Satisfied with the punishment and promises of the patriarch, the grand rabbi Aaron Jacob forgave the Christian attacker who was freed.[171]

In two of these cases, the initial fight occurred in the Maydān, similarly to the accusation blood libel of 1847. Given that the pro-patriarch party from among the Greek Catholics, close to the French consul, lived in the Maydān, it can be supposed that they had a hand in the repeated accusations against the Jews from 1847 to 1856. Solidarity between Christians and Muslims in the neighborhood of the Maydān was strong, which could explain the involvement of Muslims in these blood libels. Then, the popular nature of the neighborhood, inhabited by less wealthy Greek Catholics, also points to the increasing involvement of the commoners of all communities in inter-confessional conflicts.

The timing of the blood libels can also be linked to the political activities of European Jews in the Ottoman Empire. In December 1850, the French banker Gustav de Rothschild had come to Damascus to erase the inscription on the tomb of the Father Thomas that read : "Here rests the bones of Father Thomas da Sardegna, Mgr Capucin murdered by the Jews on the 5th of June 1840." He also had an official request for this purpose by Lord Normansby, the British ambassador to France. However Rothschild's visit was to no avail. Indeed, rather than finding an agreement, his visit and the ways in which Jews welcomed him rather displeased the Christians.[172] In April 1856, Moses Montefiore, who had been instrumental in giving publicity in Europe to the blood libel of 1840, came to Damascus and demanded again to change the tombstone of Father Thomas.[173] In the aftermath of this visit, the accusation of

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[170] F.O, 195/458, Misk- Redcliffe, October 29th 1856.
[171] Ibid.
[172] A.E., 166/PO-Serie D/20, vol. 3, De Segur-Lavalette, December 5th 1850.
[173] A.E., 67/CPC, vol 5, 6, Outrey- Compte Walewski, April 20th 1856.

blood libel took place. Such accusations often took place when the balance of power between the Jewish and Greek Catholic elites shifted.

In conclusion, the accusations against the Jews in the aftermath of the violence of 1860 point to the tense relationship between some Jews and Greek Catholics in Damascus and the development of sectarian discourses based upon the assumed enmity between the two religious communities. These tensions were heightened by the competition between notables of both communities in the provincial administration, which affected larger inter-confessional relations. The repeated accusations of blood libel took place during shifts in the balance of power between the elite of the two communities either on the imperial scale or locally. The accusations were used as tools to delegitimize opponents or gain access to resources, yet they affected how both communities perceived each other, contributing to the confessionalization of the society. These accusations led to a sense of togetherness among Ottoman Jews and encouraged solidarity between European Jews and their coreligionists in the Ottoman Empire, reinforcing the political strength of religious identifications. The financial activities of the Jewish elite and the increasing reliance of the local treasury on their loans made them susceptible to accusations of connivance with the governor and with the irregular military. These links were used against them in the aftermath of the violence of 1860. The relation between Jews and Christians in the first part of the 19th century confirm the general societal development of the increasing confessionalization of Ottoman society, inter-confessional tensions and violence.

CHAPTER 10: TRANSFORMATIONS OF THE OTTOMAN STATE STRUCTURE: REBELLION AGAINST THE *TANZIMAT* FINANCIAL AND MILITARY REFORMS

The events of 1860 in many ways can be seen as a rebellion against the local and imperial government. The attacks against Christians was an attack upon those who were associated with the government as they turned into symbols of everything that was deemed wrong in the reforming project of the *Tanzimat*. They became associated with the taxation reforms, conscription, and the transformation of the social order. The violence of 1860 is exceptional in its scope and duration. However, it is not the only occasion of violence against Christians in the mid-19th century. In many cases, violence against Christians was a consequence of rebellions against taxation, conscription, and the centralization policies of the governor. An exploration of the violence of 1860 through the perspective of the previous events of violence will highlight the causal link between popular rebellion, military mutiny and inter-confessional violence.

We will first explore the deterioration of state-society relations through the imposition of taxation and conscription, which led to attacks on intermediaries. Then, we will examine how these policies caused widespread revolts in *Bilād al-Šām* in 1850 which ended up targeting Christians. Finally, we will examine the violence of 1860 as a consequence of the governor Ahmed Paşa's double standard policies in the end of the 1850's.

1. Taxation and Conscription

Rebellion against taxation and conscription was widespread in the *Tanzimat* period in peripheral regions such as Bosnia, Serbia and *Bilād al-Šām*. Some types of rebellions were accepted by the government as part of larger negotiation process, as a bargaining chip, which

did not threaten the government directly.[1] Tensions resurfaced yearly around the time of collection of taxes,[2] that is March or the *hiğrī* month of Muḥarram depending on the tax. Yet the intensity of these tensions and the conflicts that resulted were not of equal intensity every year. The terms of the discussion and the concepts used evolved with the transformation of imperial governance, international relations and local dynamics.

It is difficult to draw a general picture of the taxation system in the Ottoman Empire, for it depended greatly on the context and region. The different taxes applied and the relation between tax-farmers and the government witnessed great variation in time and place. Some taxes were formerly obligatory services, such as providing housing for visiting army officers, forced labor, providing crops and cattle to the government or supplies to the army. In time, because of the difficulty of providing these services, they were converted into obligatory taxes. There was thus a large array of taxes in the 15th and 16th century.[3] In the later centuries, there were additional taxes imposed on Ottoman subjects. Some of them were variable, yet others were permanent such as the tax on agricultural production and land, custom duties, and the *ğizya* for non-Muslims.[4] Inhabitants of the Ottoman Empire had also often paid the *iḥtisāb* tax on industrial and commercial revenue and the tax on housing called *avarizhane*.[5]

During the *Tanzimat* period however a new type of tax was introduced, which was considered illegitimate by a large part of the population. In 1831, the governor of Damascus Salim Paşa attempted to collect a tax on urban property. This tax, called the *salyan,* was to be collected from each quarter twice a year. In 1819, there had already been an attempt to demand its payment in Aleppo but it failed because the inhabitants of the city campaigned against it. In order to impose this tax in Damascus, Salim Paşa planned to conduct a census to

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[1] Fatma Sel Turhan, *The Ottoman Empire and the Bosnian uprising: Janissaries, Modernization and Rebellion in the Nineteenth Century* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2014), 4.
[2] Abraham Marcus, *The Middle East on the Eve of Modernity : Aleppo in the Eighteenth Century* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1989), 98.
[3] Shmuelevitz, *The Jews of the Ottoman Empire,* 97-100.
[4] Issawi, *The Fertile Crescent,* 415.
[5] Okawara, "The urban fabric," 170.

correctly assess the share of the tax owned by commercial offices, workshops, cafes, farms, etc.[6] The specificity of this tax was that it was to be imposed on shops, storage and other commercial properties which were previously exempt of taxation. It was the first tax on wealth and property,[7] which would effectively allow the government to have a direct view into the urban wealth in Damascus. It would affect mostly the merchants and grain traders. While notables and ulema met with Salim Paşa and agreed to help him impose the tax, they secretly planned an uprising.[8]

In addition, Salim Paşa had been instrumental in the abolition of the Janissaries in Istanbul. He came to Damascus with a large amount of troops. Damascenes feared that he was instructed to get rid of the local Janissaries, residing in the Maydān neighborhood. Salim Paşa's taxation and military policy led to the siege of the castle and eventually cost him his life.[9] When the rebellion took place, Christians in the city were worried about their safety, they thus reached out to *āġāwāt* and paid for their protection during these troubled times.[10] The government considered that rebellion took place because the Damascene Janissaries were too used to the old system in which they received a salary of 110 *quruš* and were reluctant to let go of their privileges.[11] The issue of taxation was not brought forward to explain the violence.

Ibrāhīm ʿAlī, the son of the governor of Egypt Muḥammad ʿAlī, took advantage of this rebellion against Salim Paşa and managed to win over the support of Damascenes for his conquest of *Bilād al-Šām*. He promised the population that he would abolish the taxes of agricultural production on *miri* land, which increased his popularity, and he entered Damascus victorious. Yet, the population soon realized that the new taxation practices of the Egyptians

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[6] Ibid, 170.
[7] al-Qasāṭlī, *al-Rawḍa,* 87.
[8] al-Usṭwānī, *Mašāhid,* 37.
[9] Ibid, 37.
[10] *Muḏakkirāt tārīḫīya, 29;* Christians and Jews used to give an annual fee to guards and *āġāwāt* to protect them from possible threats, al-Dimašqī, *Tārīḫ ḥawādiṯ,* 113.
[11] Virginia H. Aksan, "The Ottoman Military and state Transformation in a Globalizing World," *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 27, no.2 (2007): 267.

were far more demanding. Ibrāhīm ʿAlī introduced a new tax called the *ferde (farda)*, or headcount tax.[12] Previously, only the *avariz* on housing and the *ğizya* were taken according to headcount. Then, those who were formerly exempted from taxes such as ulema, *āšrāf* and ʿ*ayān* were also subjected to the *ferde*. This universal taxation had no precedent in Damascene history. To be sure, Damascenes did pay taxes, but they were based on specific commercial actions and revenues, such as customs, *avariz*, etc.[13] These taxes were not universal and applied to a specific area or function. A personal individual tax, in the manner of the *ğizya*, had never been implemented before. The anonymous Christian author of *Muḏakirāt Tariḫīyya* mentioned that when the Egyptian government first applied the *ferde*, Damascenes were angry because they were not used to paying taxes. Furthermore, the *āġāwāt* and *āšrāf* were especially shocked because they had always been exempted due to their privileged status.[14] What especially angered the population was that the taxpayers were given a paper to show that they paid the *ferde*, which reminded them of the *ğizya* papers. Some Muslims complained that they had become like *ḏimmī*.[15] They thus refused to pay this tax that they found humiliating.[16]

The resemblance between the *ğizya* and the *ferde* did not stop here, as the *ferde* was also used to pay for the recruitment of the army and its maintenance. Thus, even those benefiting from ʿ*askerī* status had to pay for the maintenance of the army, which had previously been ensured by the *ğizya.* This innovation challenged the previous understanding according to which Muslims would contribute to the military force of the empire and non-Muslims would pay a tax to support the military efforts.

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[12] Büssow and Safi, *Damascus affair,* 88.
[13] Okawara, "The urban fabric," 170.
[14] Büssow and Safi, *Damascus affairs*, 87.
[15] Ibid, 87.
[16] A.E., 67/CPC, Ratti-Menton- Guizot, November 30th 1843.

In 1841, a tithe on income was imposed by the Egyptian regime,[17] thus consolidating the previous attempt of Salim Paşa to tax property and wealth. The taxation methods of the Egyptian government created strong resentments among the population.[18] The imposition of a headcount tax was detrimental both to the poor, who would have been exempted from lump sum taxes, and to the elite who lost their position as members of the government and were turned into simple subjects. This resentment was later directed towards Christians, who had been associated with the Egyptian regime, but also towards tax-collectors including neighborhood shaykhs. After the departure of the Egyptians in 1841, the property of many of these shaykhs was plundered by the population and some of them were killed.[19]

In addition to the introduction of new modes of taxation, Ibrāhīm ʿAlī also introduced conscription. Ibrāhīm ʿAlī was the first one to attempt to levy conscripts from Damascus and to impose a general disarmament of the population. Many regions rebelled against conscription, including Palestine, Tripoli and Karak. The revolts led to attacks on government officials and soldiers but also on Christians or Jews.[20]

Ibrāhīm ʿAlī decided to focus on the conscription of Druze.[21] However, he was unable to defeat them. This caused a blow to the Egyptian troops' reputation.[22] Druze and Bedouins ended up allying against Ibrāhīm ʿAlī[23] further challenging his rule in the Ḥawrān. He had to rely on local forces rather than his foreign army to crush the rebellion of Druze in Ḥawrān. He used Christians from Mount Lebanon to coerce Druze into conscription.[24] In 1839, he got the

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[17] Büssow and Safi, *Damascus affairs*, 165.
[18] al-Dimašqī, *Tārīḫ ḥawādiṯ,* 276.
[19] A.E., 67/CPC vol. 1/2, Ratti-Menton-Guizot, January 6th 1841.
[20] Büssow and Safi, *Damascus affairs*, 90-98.
[21] A.E., 166/PO-Serie D/20, vol. 2, Beaudin-Roussin, January 17th 1838.
[22] A.E., 166/PO-Serie D/20, vol. 2, Beaudin-Roussin, March 9th 1838.
[23] These two groups had a special relationship. Indeed, Druze were exempted from the compulsory protection fee taken on Ḥawrānī peasants by Bedouins. It was due to the fact that the Druze had their own militias and this could ensure their own protection. Then, the solidarity existing between Druze, whether from Ḥawrān or Mount Lebanon, was a show of strength against attacks. Finally, Druze could block Bedouin tribes' access to the grain markets of the Ḥawrān and thus threaten their access to food, Pierre de Ségur Dupeyron, "La Syrie et les Bédouins sous l'administration turque," *Revue des Deux Mondes*, 2nd serie, vol. 9, (1855): 1281.
[24] Abkāriyūs, *Kitāb Nawādir,* 59.

son of Emir Bashir II, Emir Ḫalīf, to send 4000 Christians to help the Egyptians.[25] These endeavors however were complete failures.[26] The participation of Christians into government's attempts to coerce the Druze into conscription is often pointed to as the cause of Druze animosity towards Christians.[27] During their attacks against the Druze, Christian militias plundered a Druze sanctuary at Wadī al-Taym, bringing into the open Druze books which had been kept hidden, in accordance with Druze' beliefs. Their secrets were thus revealed, an offense which the chronicler Iskandar Abkāriyūs linked to the violence of the following years.[28]

Similarly to the dynamics in Ḥawrān, 1500 Christians from Mount Lebanon were also sent to Damascus to keep order in the city.[29] Thus, while Damascenes were subject to disarming and conscription, they saw armed Christians from Mount Lebanon parading in the city.[30] This image of Christian collaboration with the Egyptian government to enforce conscription was hard to erase and influenced the meanings associated with conscription. For this reason the French consular agent Jean-Baptiste Beaudin reported that Muslims started to hate Christians and Europeans whom they saw as the cause of the recent changes and especially of conscription.[31] When in 1837 there were rumors that the Druze had defeated the soldiers in the Ḥawrān, both the soldiers in Damascus and the Christians were attacked by the population.[32] Revolts against the Egyptian regime often included attacks and pillages of Christian or Jewish houses. For example, in 1834 Jews of Safed, Hebron and Tiberias suffered multiple pillages during the insurrection of the peasants and the Druze against the newly

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[25] A.E., 166/PO-Serie D/20, vol. 2, Beaudin-Roussin, January 17th 1839.
[26] Abkāriyūs, *Kitāb Nawādir,* 59.
[27] Ibid, 60.
[28] Ibid, 59.
[29] A.E., 166/PO-Serie D/20, vol. 2, Beaudin-Roussin, May 10th 1839.
[30] A.E., 166/PO-Serie D/20, vol. 2, Beaudin-Roussin, January 17th 1839.
[31] A.E., 166/PO-Serie D/20, vol. 2, Beaudin-Roussin, May 2nd 1838.
[32] Büssow and Safi, *Damascus affairs*, 103.

declared military draft and disarmament.[33] Rebellions against disarmament also took place in Ğabal Nāblus and the Ğabal Ānṣārīya mountains.[34] The Maronite Emir Šihāb's troops were again used to put down the rebellion.[35]

Eventually, a large-scale revolt erupted in *Bilād al-Šām* against Egyptian policies which compelled Ibrāhīm ʿAlī to leave the territory in 1841. After the Ottoman return to Damascus, many inhabitants expected a return to the pre-Egyptian situation. However, the Ottoman governors rather chose to build on the measures taken by their predecessors. *ʿAyān* and ulema met after the Egyptian departure to draft a decree forbidding Christians and Jews to wear white turbans, to ride horses and to have slaves. The application of the decree was curtailed by the governor who confirmed the rights and freedom granted by the Egyptians.[36] The Ottoman government had indeed passed the 1839 Gülhane edict while Damascenes were under the Egyptian rule. The government also sought to foster the loyalty of its Christian subjects. Many Muslim Damascenes were thus disappointed by the return of the Ottoman governor who continued the political, economic and social reforms promulgated by the Egyptians.[37] This was also true for taxation. Since the lands of *Bilād al-Šām* had not been subjected to a large-scale survey beforehand, the government did not have a clear idea about its resources. It seems that with the Egyptian rule, and its ability to collect resources from this region, the Ottoman government realized its potential. Arrears of taxes unpaid to the Egyptians were even calculated into tax-collection and demanded from Damascenes.[38]

Yet, although taxation was not reduced, the Ottoman government was not able to deliver on some of the promises made by the Egyptians. For example, peasants saw their taxes

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[33] Gudrun Krämer, *A History of Palestine: From the Ottoman Conquest to the Founding of the state of Israel* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008), 78.
[34] Dick Douwes, "Reorganizing Violence: Traditional Recruitment Patterns and Resistance Against Conscription in Ottoman Syria," in *Arming the state: Conscription in the Middle East and Central Asia, 1775–1925,* ed. Erik Jan Zurcher (London: I.B. Tauris, 1999), 122.
[35] Dick Douwes, "Justice and oppression: Ottoman rule in the province of Damascus and the district of Hama, 1785-1841," PhD diss., (Nijmegen University, 1994), 133.
[36] A.E. 67/CPC, vol. 1/2, Ratti-Menton-Guizot, January 6th 1841.
[37] *Aḥwāl al-naṣārā*, 18.
[38] A.E., 166/PO-Serie D/20, vol. 3, de Ségur-Aspick, , Rebruary 12th 1851.

double during the Egyptian period, because Ibrāhīm ʿAlī had promised to relieve them of Bedouin incursions and thus abolished the 'protection fee' they used to pay to Bedouin tribes. After the departure of the Egyptians, the Ottoman government kept the same taxation rate but was not able to continue protecting the peasants from Bedouin incursions. They thus had to pay a protection fee to the government in addition to the protection fee to Bedouins.[39]

As per the *ferde*, it was not collected until 1843 for fear of rebellion.[40] In December 1843, the governor Ali Paşa revealed the order to apply the *ferde* in the *mağlis*. It was to be transformed into a property tax called the *vergi* (*wirqū*).[41] Rather than the head-tax imposed by the Egyptians, this tax was to be imposed on revenue and property. It was thus the same tax that Salim Paşa had attempted to apply under the name *salyan*. However, the members of the *mağlis* who were in charge of distributing the tax among the social groups found a way to avoid it. They transformed the *vergi* back into *ferde*, thus avoiding the assessment of revenue.[42] To do so they claimed that there were no census of property in the city. The governor hesitated to impose a census for his predecessor Salim Paşa had been murdered when he tried to do the same.[43] Then, *mağlis* members imposed on each community a certain percentage of the tax based on demographic proportions.

The Maydān neighborhood rebelled immediately against this new tax.[44] The same individuals who had been involved in the uprising against Salim Paşa in 1831 plotted to cause a city-wide rebellion. It was however discovered early and the intriguers were arrested.[45] Christians and Jews also refused to pay the tax. With the help of consuls, they contested the demographic basis of the calculation of their share of the tax, arguing that their numbers had

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[39] A.E., 166/PO-Serie D/20, vol. 3, de Ségur-Lavalette, January 14th 1852.
[40] F.O., 195/291, Timoni-Cowley, September 1st 1847.
[41] F.O., 195/291,Timoni-Cowley, September 1st September; BOA, ML.VRD.CMH.d.253, 1834.
[42] A. E., 67/CPC, vol. 1/2, Devoize-Guizot, December 8th 1843.
[43] Mishāqah, *Murder, Mayhem*, 165.
[44] A. E., 67/CPC, vol. 1/2, Devoize-Bourqueney, March 6th 1844.
[45] Ibid.

been increased and the Muslim population's numbers had been reduced.[46] They sent a petition to the sultan demanding that the tax be imposed on revenue. They also claimed that a new census was necessary to determine the share of each individual.[47] Their interests were thus diametrically opposed to the Muslim elite's interests who attempted to avoid the conduct of a new census. According to the British consul, the overestimation of non-Muslims was caused by the fact that the disabled were counted in the number of non-Muslims while they were not for Muslims. He stated that 2000 Christians and Jewish men were counted by the *mağlis* members, while only 6000 Muslim men were accounted for. Non-Muslims thus represented 1/4 of the taxable population according to *mağlis* members.[48] When looking at the *ğizya* records of 1843 the number of non-Muslim men does not seem exaggerated for it counted 3771 non-Muslim men,[49] in 1848 it was reduced to 3692 men.[50] According to the statistics of the *Paşalik* of Damascus compiled by the French consul in 1842 there were 12500 Christians and 4850 Jews in the city, for 90500 Muslims.[51] It is thus clear that it was the number of Muslim men which was underestimated. The government already had a headcount of non-Muslims because of the calculations of the *ğizya* but it did not have a headcount of Muslims. Without an accurate census, it could not assess the Muslim population and thus had to rely on *mağlis* members' calculations, which they twisted to their advantage. The British consul Wood stated that when he asked the governor why he did not base the tax on the income of corporations, trades and classes to alleviate the poor, he responded that the registers had been burned. Wood argued that he was misled by the members of the *mağlis*, because he had a copy of this register from the Egyptian period.[52]

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[46] Ibid ; FO, 195/226, Wood-Canning, February 21st 1844.
[47] F.O., 195/226, Wood-Canning, February 21st 1844.
[48] Ibid.
[49] BOA, ML.VRD.CMH.d.253, 1834.
[50] BOA, C.ML.603.24869, October 6th 1850.
[51] A. E., 67/CPC, vol. 1/2, Beaudin-Guizot, June 4th 1842.
[52] F.O., 195/226, Wood-Canning, February 21st 1844.

The imposition of a tax to be divided among religious community was prone to inter-confessional conflicts. A document found in the Ottoman archives describes what took place during tax collection in 1843. The initial order called for 2000 purses of *quruš*[53] to be taken from Damascus, 240 were assigned to Christians and 90 to Jews, the remaining 1670 were assigned to Muslims. Thus Muslims had to pay 84% and non-Muslim 16% of the tax. Yet, at the time of collection 300 purses of *quruš* were taken by mistake from Christians and 200 from Jews, which amounted to 500 purses for non-Muslims, representing 25% of the tax. The error was only noticed in 1847.[54] This error in collection might have been the work of *maǧlis* members. They obviously attempted to avoid the taxation of their own wealth as property holders and merchants.[55]

The issue of the distribution of the tax between religious groups was closely linked to the distribution among social classes. In the end, across the religious spectrum, elites used strategies to avoid taxation while outwardly pretending to defend the poor from their *millet* by accusing the other religious groups of escaping taxes. This sectarian discourse contributed to inter-confessional tensions among commoners. Non-Muslims elites pointed to the Muslim notables, merchants and *āšrāf* as the ones to deserve taxation because of their wealth, while Muslim notables pointed to the Christian protégés, their luxurious appearances and residences. While the Muslim elite used the *maǧlis* to avoid taxation, protégés were exempt from taxation, thus increasing the burden on the commoners, fostering popular mobilization. In addition, among Muslims, there was a general understanding that the *ferde* taxation was the work of foreign powers, adding to resentments toward foreigners and Christians.[56]

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[53] Currency.
[54] BOA, MVL.17.14, November 27th 1847.
[55] Regarding the distribution system of ancient-regime taxation see François Hincker, *Les Français devant l'impôt sous l'Ancien Régime,* Collection "Questions d'histoire", no. 22 (Paris: Flamarion, 1971), 34-37.
[56] A.E., CCC/98, vol. 1, Devoize-Guizot, December 30th 1843.

This conflict over the tax lasted for decades as the *ferde* also increased and arrears accumulated.[57] In 1849, the arrears had accumulated to 75 000 purses, which amounted to the revenue of the province for two years. The provincial treasury was no longer able to pay for the conduct of the hajj and had to borrow from the central treasury. Because of the increased taxes, peasants were leaving their lands uncultivated. This situation encouraged the central government to send its own tax-collectors to the province to smooth the process of tax-collection.[58]

The conduct of a census was the only way to solve conflicting claims between Christians and Muslims, however, when a census was conducted in 1848 in the Ḥawrān, the peasants fled, the inhabitants rebelled and expelled their governor, just as the Damascenes had done in 1831.[59] Censuses were considered as indicators of conscription and taxation and thus met with opposition. Ironically, censuses were also required to access to the demands of the population to apply a progressive taxation based on personal income.

The reforms of taxation created intense tensions between Damascenes, the local government and Istanbul. They challenged the existing hierarchies and forms of government. However, intermediaries such as tax-farmers, irregular troops chieftains, emirs, but also *maǧlis* members, had the advantage of distance from Istanbul and were well embedded in local patronage networks, which allowed them to thwart these attempts at leveling the various elements of Damascene society.[60] The negotiations regarding the distribution of the new taxes reveals a class conflict and the ability of the elite to escape taxation through foreign protection or the use of the new institutions created by the *Tanzimat*. However, rather than

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[57] A.E., 166/PO-Serie D/20, vol. 2, Tippel-Bourqueney, April 16th 1845.
[58] F.O., 195/291, Wood-Canning, June 20th 1849.
[59] F.O., 195/291, Wood-Canning, November 8th 1848.
[60] On art of managing the provinces of the Ottoman Empire, see Marc Aymes, *A Provincial History of the Ottoman Empire.*

turning into a conflict between the elite and commoners, the taxation issue was shaped into an inter-confessional struggle through sectarian discourses and strategies of diversion.

2. The Revolts of 1850

Reforms in the domains of taxation and conscription encountered many obstacles, especially in provinces such as *Bilād al-Šām*, where different actors had enjoyed great autonomy in the 18th century. Direct taxation by government agents and conscription aimed at decreasing the power of irregular chieftains and other tax intermediaries as well as to integrate irregular troops into the state apparatus. The government was extending into new areas and domains which had previously been managed by indirect forms of rule. The rebellion led by some groups towards these measures and the government's incapacity to negotiate these reforms contributed to a situation of violence and struggle in the vicinity of Damascus, mainly in the Ḥawrān and Biqā'.

In 1850, in this context of resistance against taxation, the governor attempted again to apply conscription.[61] In Damascus, the inhabitants were quick to respond with a strike by closing their shops, coffee houses and khans. Seeing this turn of events, Christians feared to be the recipient of violence.[62] However, conscription was applied and 300 soldiers were taken.[63]

While conscription did not meet with serious rebellion in Damascus, Hama and Homs,[64] the situation in Aleppo, Ḥawrān and Baalbek was quite different. Widespread rebellions took place in these regions which ended up in an attack against Christians in both the Biqā' and the city of Aleppo. The violence of 1860 in Damascus, Rašayā, Ḥāṣbayā, Zaḥle and Mount Lebanon are to be read in the continuation of these events. These rebellions indeed feature some of the same actors.

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[61] A.E., 166/PO-Serie D/20, vol. 3, Valberg-French Ambassador in Istanbul, January 2nd 1850.
[62] F.O., 226/105, Calvert-Palmerston, September 26th 1850.
[63] F.O., 226/105, Calvert-Palmerston, September 26th 1850; F.O., 226/105, Calvert-Palmerston, October 9th 1850.
[64] A.E., 166/PO-Serie D/20, vol. 3, de Ségur-Aupick, January 8th 1851.

An association can indeed be made between rebellions against taxation, conscription and attacks against Christians. The author of *Aḥwāl al-Naṣārā* mentioned that those who resisted the reforms of the state were fomenting rebellion in Damascus, Mount Lebanon and in the Anṣārīya Mountain. He made the interesting comment that those who opposed the government often attacked Christians, because they became the target of resentment.[65] Featuring predominantly in these events of violence are *āġāwāt* and some irregular troops. Violence against Christians and Jews often took place when the relation between the Muslim population and the government was tense, during rebellions and uprisings.[66] These various layers of rebellion which interacted are present in events of violence in the first part of the 19th century.

The Ḥawrān had been the center of rebellion against the Egyptians. Ibrāhīm ʿAlī had managed to reestablish order in Ḥawrān by using a combination of force and monetary deals. He relied on the Hannādī Bedouin under his protection.[67] After the Ottomans regained power, the governors had some trouble ensuring the control of the Ḥawrān, and especially to control Bedouins.[68] All means were used to prevent the joint rebellion of Bedouin tribes and Druze in the region.

The governor sought to handle Bedouins in a variety of ways. He used divide and rule policies,[69] led frontal attacks and attempted to humiliate them.[70] Finally, the governor attempted to replace Bedouins in the region with his own *āġāwāt.* The Bedouins however refused this usurpation of their position and attacked these *āġāwāt* in 1849.[71] In 1850, Bedouins and Druze allied in the Ḥawrān against the measures of the government. The

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[65] *Aḥwāl al-naṣārā*, 5.
[66] Similar revolts took place in the Balkans in the 18th century which can shed light on the rebellions of the 19th century *Bilād al-Šām*, see Fikret Adanir, "Semi-Autonomous Provincial Forces in the Balkans and Anatolia," in *The Cambridge History of Turkey*, vol. 3, ed. Suraiya N. Faroqhi (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 172.
[67] F.O., 195/291, Wood-Canning, April 11th 1849.
[68] F.O., 195/226, Wood-Ali Paşa, February 22nd 1843.
[69] A.E., 166/PO-Serie D/20, vol. 2, Bourqueney- Tippel, May 20th 1845.
[70] F.O., 195/291, Wood-Canning, October 4th 1848.
[71] F.O., 195/291, Wood-Canning, April 11th 1849.

Ḥawrān, difficult to access for the government, was a meeting place for youth fleeing military service, but also semi-autonomous groups who hoped to escape the increasing authority of the state. When conscription was announced in 1850, the state of the cities and countryside rapidly deteriorated. It led to a decline in trade as peasants avoided the towns full of soldiers for fear of being levied, and shopkeepers closed their shops or left town.[72] The government resorted to instituting a passport system in order to avoid the flight of recruits.[73] Conscription was accompanied by campaigns of disarming, which left the inhabitants of the district unprotected in the face of plundering raids of the Bedouins or irregular forces.[74] The author of *Aḥwāl al-Naṣārā* blamed the weakness of the government and the corruption of its representatives for the political instability in the years after Ibrāhīm ʿAlī's rule, which upset the power arrangements which had been set up in the region and encouraged Bedouin tribes to commit plunder and destruction.[75]

In the Ḥawrān, Christians also allied with Druze in their rebellion.[76] The alliance of Christians and Druze in the Ḥawrān but also in Mount Lebanon was worrisome to the government but also to foreign consuls who saw in this alliance a threat of general insurrection which would compromise the Ottoman hold on these regions.[77] The governor thus adopted a divide and rule policy which had dire consequences for inter-confessional relations. The governor confided in Wood that he was planning to recruit Maronites to pacify the Druze in the Ḥawrān to avoid the alliance of these two groups. The British consul was instructed by his foreign minister to discourage the governor of this plan which would backfire.[78] This issue dragged over time, leaving the Ḥawrān in a state of ongoing rebellion

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[72] F.O., 226/105, Calvert-Palmerston, June 29th 1850.
[73] Ibid.
[74] Douwes, "Reorganizing Violence," 111.
[75] *Aḥwāl al-naṣārā*, p 3
[76] A.E., CCC/98, vol 3, Barrere-de Lhuys, July 26th 1853.
[77] A.E., CCC/98, vol 3, Barrere-de Lhuys, July 26th 1853.
[78] F.O., 195/368, Wood-Rose, December 8th 1852.

that lasted through the violence of 1860. In the summer of 1860, the Bedouins camped nearby Damascus were quick to join the violence and plunder.[79]

In 1852, Bedouin tribes overcame their differences and allied against the governor.[80] Seeing his increasing power in the Ḥawrān, the governor planned to recruit Druze of Mount Lebanon and the Anti-Lebanon against the Bedouin.[81] The Druze however refused to be used against Bedouins and in consequence, the government sent the army to fight them.[82] Leaders of the Ḥawrān such as the Druze Āṭraš and Ḥamdān leaders, and the *āġā* Muḥammad al-Rifāʿī wrote a petition to Wood complaining about the plunder of their goods by the army and the destruction of their villages.[83]

From the 1850's onwards, the Druze of the Ḥawrān also allied with the Ḥarfūš tribe against the government centralization objectives.[84] They both demanded the protection of the British consul against the government. This alliance between Druze and the Ḥarfūš was again witnessed during the attacks of Zaḥle in 1860.[85] The imposition of conscription actually led to an alliance of all semi-autonomous groups against the governor.

The British consul of Damascus, Mr. Wood, turned into a spokesperson for the Druze. He saw that the Druze were increasingly gaining influence over the Ḥawrān, under the leadership of the Āṭraš family.[86] In 1852, Wood invited the Druze chiefs to meet in Ḥāṣbayā and warned them of rebellion against the government. He thereby imposed himself as an intermediary between the Druze and the government.[87] He built a large property in the Anti-Lebanon in Blūdān among the Druze and close to the Protestant missionary

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[79] Büssow and Safi, *Damascus affairs*, 5.
[80] A.E., 166/PO-Serie D/20, vol. 3, de Ségur- Lavalette, January 21st 1852.
[81] A.E., 166/PO-Serie D/20, vol. 3, de Ségur-Lavalette, February 25th 1852.
[82] A.E., 166/PO-Serie D/20, vol. 3, Barbet de Jouy-Lavalette, September 15th 1852.
[83] F.O., 195/368, Wood-Earl of Malmesbury, November 18th 1852.
[84] Ibid.
[85] Ibid.
[86] F.O., 195/291, Calvert-Canning, May 2nd 1850.
[87] F.O., 195/368, Wood-Muşir Mehmed Paşa, November 25th 1852.

headquarters.[88] The assistance of Wood in the aftermath of the revolt of 1850 seems to have paid off for the Druze received a letter from the governor in 1853 ensuring them that they would not have to give conscripts if they were loyal subjects, meaning if they paid the taxes.[89]

After the Ḥawrān, on October 15ᵗʰ 1850, Aleppines rose in rebellion against the *ferde* and the universal conscription. One of the main demands of the rebels was to base the *ferde* on property rather than individuals. Yet, unlike the rebellion of Damascus, the rioters, after failing to capture the governor, set out to the wealthy Christian quarter of al-Ṣalība and plundered it. Al-Ṣalība was an important center of trade and textile manufacture and represented the rise of a Christian commercial bourgeoisie.[90] Here again, discontent towards the government ended up in plunder and violence against the Christian elite of the city.

One day after the rebellion started in Aleppo, on October 16ᵗʰ, the Ḥarfūš rose in rebellion in the Biqāʿ. The Biqāʿ, together with the Ḥawrān and Baalbek, had been ruled by the Ḥarfūš emirs but were incrementally taken away from them. The Ḥawrān and the Biqāʿ had benefited from the profitable grain trade, raising the stakes of government interventionism in these areas.[91] Since the Egyptian rule, the Damascene governors were engaged in a power struggle with the *āġāwāt* of the areas around the city. They sought to put an end to the autonomy of these intermediaries who had contributed to the consolidation of power of local notables, or *ʿayān,* in the 18ᵗʰ century.

In 1844, the Ḥarfūš were replaced as sub-governors of the Biqāʿ by the Damascene Kurdish *āġā*, Aḥmad āġā al-Yūsuf, who was close to the Maronite Šihāb ruler.[92] The British consul Wood, who had favored the Ḥarfūš was quite unhappy about this choice.[93] Afterwards,

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[88] A.E., 166/PO-Serie D/20, vol. 3, Barbet de Jouy-Lavalette, September 9ᵗʰ 1852.

[89] F.O., 195/368, Wood-Ali Paşa, January 3ʳᵈ 1853.

[90] Feras Krimsti "The 1850 Uprising in Aleppo. Reconsidering the Explanatory Power of Sectarian Argumentations," in *Urban Violence in the Middle East. Changing Cityscapes in the Transition from Empire to Nation state,* ed. Ulrike Freitag and Nelida Fuccaro (New York / Oxford: Berghahn 2015), 154-155.

[91] A.E., 166/PO-Serie D/20, vol. 2, Tippel-Bourqueney, April 16ᵗʰ 1845.

[92] A.E., 166/PO-Serie D/20, vol. 2, Tippel-Bourqueney, June 26ᵗʰ 1845.

[93] F.O., 78/579, Wood- Aberdeen, January 25ᵗʰ 1844.

the irregular troop leader Muṣṭafā āġā Ḥabīb was named sub-governor and remained in place in the Biqāʿ until January 1850. At that point, he was dismissed and replaced by the military officer Ali Yaver sent from Istanbul.[94] He represented the increasing centralization of the government control over peripheral lands.

The last pocket of Ḥarfūš power was Baalbek, which remained under the administration of the family. However, Christians foreign protégés complained about the sub-governor Muḥammad Ḥarfūš to the government because he frustrated their commercial interest, and they obtained his removal.[95] The French consul was eager to get rid of the Ḥarfūš, whom he accused of pillaging the population.[96] The Ḥarfūš family had indeed been beneficial to the British commercial and financial interests, while they had frustrated the attempts of the French protégés to obtain tax-farms.[97] The French consul played an important role in the Ḥarfūš's dismissal.[98]

In the beginning of October 1850, ten days before the rebellion erupted, an order was sent to take Baalbek away from the Ḥarfūš emirs because of their opposition to the conduct of conscription. Baalbek was to be put under the authority of the sub-governor of the Biqāʿ, the aforementioned Ali Yaver, who now controlled Biqāʿ, Baalbek and Hama.[99] Upset by this dismissal in 1850, Muḥammad and Ḥassan Ḥarfūš took their 500 irregular cavaliers and went close to Damascus, recruiting individuals for their rebellion.[100] However the city did not rise against the sultan as they had expected. Muḥammad and Ḥassan Ḥarfūš thus escaped. They met however with the strong will of the serasker of Damascus Emin Paşa and suffered various

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[94] BOA, A.MKT.MVL.24.6, January 13th 1850; F.O., 195/291, Calvert-Canning, May 2nd 1850; Ali Yaver had been the *kaymakam* of Damascus during the pilgrimage in 1849 and in 1850 he was also named governor of Hama.
[95] F.O., 195/291, Calvert-Canning, October 15th 1850.
[96] A.E., 166/PO-Serie D/20, vol. 5, Barrere-Ali Paşa, November 22nd 1854.
[97] French protégés.
[98] A.E., 166/PO-Serie D/20, vol. 5, Barrere-Ali Paşa, November 22nd 1854.
[99] BOA, A.AMD.22.48, October 6th 1850; AMD.22.67, October 6th 1850. Moritz Sobernheim, "Baalbek", in *E.J. Brill's First Encyclopedia of Islam*, 1st ed., vol. 1 (Leiden: Brill, 1913-1936), 544; BOA, AMD.22.67, October 6th 1850.
[100] A.E., 166/PO-Serie D/20, vol. 3, Valberg-Lavalette, October 28th 1850.

losses. Other members of the family came to Damascus to surrender to the government. As Muḥammad and Ḥassan Ḫarfūš were followed by the governor's troops, they took refuge in the mostly Christian village of Maʿlūlā, on the road between Damascus and Yabrud.[101] Both the Ḫarfūš emirs and the army soldiers entered Maʿlūlā. What happened next is the subject of controversy, but it resulted in the pillage of churches, Christians and Muslim houses, and led to the murder of a Greek Catholic priest and the wounding of a Greek Orthodox priest by the army.[102] The responsibility for the plunder bore predominantly on the government troops.

According to the governor, the inhabitants had given refuge to the Ḫarfūš emirs. Then, troops followed them into the churches and houses of Christians and plunder took place. In this narrative, the damage was caused by the alliance of the inhabitants with the rebels. The inhabitants however denied that they had given refuge to the Ḫarfūš.[103] They claimed that Salmān Ḫarfūš had written to them asking them to rise against the government under threat of violence, but that they had refused.[104] The town's Christian inhabitants, pushed by Great Britain and Russia, asked for reparations from the Ottoman government. They claimed that their share of taxes, which had been kept in the church had been stolen.[105]

Among the irregular troops used by Emin Paşa to catch the Ḫarfūš figured Muḥammad Saʿīd āġā Zakarīyyāʾ. He was known to the inhabitants of Maʿlūlā because he had sought refuge in the city a few years earlier when he had been fired from the position of *kethüda* of the governor. The population however had refused to give him shelter. In 1850, he was accused by the Russian consul of having led the *başıbozuk* to plunder Maʿlūlā after the defeat of the Ḫarfūsh.[106] It can be seen as an act of revenge. In the end, the two emirs Muḥammad

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[101] Ibid.
[102] Pichon, *Maaloula,* 110.
[103] A.E., 166/PO-Serie D/20, vol. 3, Valberg- French Ambassador in Istanbul, October 30th 1850.
[104] F.O., 195/291, Calvert-Canning, November 8th 1850.
[105] A.E., 166/PO-Serie D/20, vol. 3, de Ségur-Minister Plenipotentiary, January 14th 1851.
[106] A.E., 166/PO-Serie D/20, vol. 3, Basily-Titof, November 27th 1850, Annex to de Ségur- Ministre Plenipotentaire, January 14th 1851; A.E., 166/PO-Serie D/20, vol. 3, Valberg-French Ambassador Istanbul, March 27th 1850.

and Ḥassan were arrested and paraded in shackles in the Damascus.[107] Part of the Ḥarfūš family was sent to Crete as a punishment. After these events, conscription in the Ḥawrān was suspended.[108]

In spite of the strong orders received by the governor against the Ḥarfūš, the British consul Wood managed to obtain the return of Salmān Harfush to power in 1854.[109] In 1854, Salmān Ḥarfūš had created disorders in the Biqā' and was called to Damascus by the governor Ali Askar Paşa . One of the instruments in the hands of the āġāwāt against their replacement by regular forces was their ability to cause disorders that only them could solve. He came to Damascus, supposedly to be judged for his actions, but actually the governor gave him the district of Baalbek. According to the French consul, the Christians of the region but also the Muslim notable were quite worried about this decision. Those who had helped dismiss the Ḥarfūš emirs by bearing witness of their oppressive rule, especially the French consul and his protégés, were quite worried about their return.[110]

There were apparently high tensions between Zahliotes and the Ḥarfūš after their return to power, for the French consul deplored various killed among the Greek Catholic Zahliotes and accused the Ḥarfūš. In the same manner, he deplored the murder of the procurer of the French protégé and tax-farmer, Mr Gedei, who had actually come to Damascus to be a witness against the Ḥarfūsh.[111] The Ḥarfūš were taking revenge against those who encouraged their dismissal. The relationship between Zaḥle and the Ḥarfūš was linked to internal division among the Ḥarfūš family. Salmān Ḥarfūš had had a fairly good relationship with Zahliots, while other members of the family such as the emir Ḥussayn resented this relationship which had strengthened his rival Salmān. Ḥussayn thus had a conflictual

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[107] A.E., 166/PO-Serie D/20, vol. 3, Valberg-Lavalette, October 28th 1850.
[108] A.E., 166/PO-Serie D/20, vol. 3, de Ségur-Aupick, January 8th 1851.
[109] Ibid.
[110] F.O., 195/368, Wood-Barbet de Jouy, March 26th 1853.
[111] Gedei was first a French protégé and later on took on British protection when his commercial ambitions were frustrated by the French consul. Ibid.

relationship with Zaḥle. In 1854, the memory of the father of Ḥussayn Ḥarfūš was insulted by a young Christian Zahliot from a respectable family. Ḥussayn took his troops to Zabadānī to punish the young man. The inhabitants of Zaḥle, hearing of the plan of Ḥussayn, sought to intercept him and stop him. The leaders of Zaḥle tried to prevent them from doing so, yet they were unable to control the crowd. As mentioned before, in the *Tanzimat period*, traditional intermediaries such as elites were increasingly challenged in their ability to exercise social control. False rumors spread that the Emir Ḥussayn had killed Greek Catholics in Zabadānī. Zaḥle's inhabitants thus sent 300 armed men to Zabadānī and 600 others to attack the Ḥarfūš in their villages.[112] The conflict between Zaḥle and the Ḥarfūš continued until 1860 and played a determinant role in the involvement of the Ḥarfūš in the attack against the city.

The government efforts to replace traditional intermediaries with officials sent from Istanbul were often unfruitful, encouraging the state to often revert to former forms of indirect rule. This is especially true for military chieftains, such as the Ḥarfūš, who were alternatively fired and re-hired to the dismay of certain foreign powers who insisted on their dismissal.

3. Ahmed Paşa's Policies and the Violence of 1860

3.1 Double Standard Policies

In 1859, the *muşir* Ahmed Paşa was given both the civil and military power in Damascus as the former governor Ali Paşa left for Jeddah. He decided to deal with semi-autonomous groups and traditional intermediaries with an iron fist. Conscription had been declared again in 1858, and he wanted to make sure that this rebellion would be avoided. He had received orders which supported his ambitions. The Ottoman governor had taken the decision to push the Ḥarfūš away from Hama once and for all.[113]

Ahmed Paşa had more chances of succeeding in this enterprise than his predecessor Namiq Paşa in 1850 because the British consul Wood had left the region in 1857. All those

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[112] F.O., 195/458, Wood-Redcliffe, August 16th 1854.
[113] A.E., 18/PO/A, vol. 9, Outrey-Thouvenel, March 31st 1858.

who had benefited from the support of the British consul Wood: the Ḥarfūš, the Druze, but also *āġāwāt* suffered from his departure. They were now left at the mercy of the governor. Wood had managed to mediate between these individuals under his protection and the governor by using his diplomatic influence.[114] The participation of Wood's protégés in the violence of 1860 is not a coincidence but rather point to their loss of authority and their strong resentments towards Ahmed Paşa's policies against them.

The governor, supported by the French consul, declared the Ḥarfūš as rebels against the Ottoman government.[115] A few weeks after, in January 1859, he arrested Salmān Ḥarfūsh.[116] Just afterwards, a rebellion took place in Hama.[117] The French consul was satisfied about Salmān's arrest, whom he accused of pillaging the country with the help of soldiers paid for by the government.[118] His negative appraisal of Salmān however had a lot to do with the latter's support of British influence in the region. The manner in which Salmān was arrested sowed the seeds for the attacks of Zaḥle in 1860. When Salmān heard that the governor had called for his arrest, he took refuge in Zaḥle as he entertained a good relationship with the inhabitants.[119] Ahmed Paşa, thinking that Salmān might be there, sent the army against the village. The governor however entered into an agreement with the notables of the city who indicated him Salmān's place of hiding.[120] This betrayal explains in part why Salmān Ḥarfūš was involved in the attacks against Zaḥle in 1860.[121] The dismissal of semi-autonomous chieftains such as the Ḥarfūš challenged the existing patron-client relationships which they had built with Christians in the countryside. Christians were increasingly turning to foreign powers or the governor for protection. However, even in a period of centralization, the government was unable to ensure the protection of its subjects in

[114] A.E., 18/PO/A, vol. 9, Outrey-Thouvenel, December 21st 1858
[115] A.E., 18/PO/A, vol. 9, Outrey-Thouvenel, October 27th 1858 and December 21st 1858.
[116] A.E., 18/PO/A, vol. 9, Outrey-Thouvenel, October 24th 1858.
[117] A.E., 18/PO/A, vol. 9, Outrey-Thouvenel, April 29th 1858 and August 11th 1858.
[118] A.E., 18/PO/A, vol. 9, Outrey-Lallemand, January 12th 1859.
[119] A.E., 18/PO/A, vol. 9, Outrey-Lallemand, January 19th 1859.
[120] Ibid.
[121] A.E., 166/PO-SerieD/20, vol. 5, Outrey-Lallemand, September 12th 1861.

the countryside, mostly because of a lack of resources. The inhabitants of the countryside were thus left at the mercy of dismissed military chieftains who had managed to escape the repetitive sanctions against them.

In the summer of 1860, before the massacres of Damascus, while Salmān was attacking Zaḥle, Muḥammad Ḫarfūš went to Baalbek, which had previously slipped from his authority and set out to kill the sub-governor Jayrūdī Fāris āġā. In his absence however he killed all the people in his house.[122] He then killed Christians and members of the government, probably out of revenge for having lost the district.[123] The Ḫarfūš's involvement in the violence can be seen as a consequence of their loss of power in the region and thus as a rebellion towards the state.

Ahmed Paşa dealt harshly with other semi-autonomous groups in the countryside and the city, pointing to a will to get rid of traditional intermediaries. After defeating the Ḫarfūš, he turned towards the Ǧabal Ānṣarīya, populated by members of the Alawi community. He destroyed the influence of the Ḫayrī family in the region and killed Ismāʿīl Bey, the chiefs of the Alawis. Eighty leaders of the Alawis were brought to Damascus and sent to Istanbul for judgement.[124] The French consul again was happy about this turn of events, which he saw as the remedy to the ills of the country.[125] In December 1859, Ahmed Paşa decapitated seven of the Alawis leaders and hang their heads in the seven quarters of Damascus. The French consul mentioned that this act of severity was uncalled for, especially after the Ǧabal Ānṣarīya had already been brought under control.[126]

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[122] al-Usṭwānī, *Mašāhid,* 171.
[123] F.O., 78/1520, Brant-Bulwer, June 13th 1860.
[124] A.E., 18/PO/A, vol. 9, Outrey-Thouvenel, December 21st 1858; For a history of the Alawis see Stefan Winter, *A History of the ʿAlawis: From Medieval Aleppo to the Turkish Republic* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2017).
[125] A.E., 18/PO/A, vol. 9, Outrey-Lallemand, January 12th 1859.
[126] A.E., 67/CPC, vol. 5/6, Outrey- Walewski, December 19th 1859.

Ahmed Paşa had wielded Hama, Baalbek and the Ğabal Ānṣarīya to his will and prepared to do the same in the Ḥawrān.[127] Previous governors had tried to get rid of the Bedouin leader Muḥammad al-Duḫī but repeatedly failed to do so. However, Ahmed Paşa was not willing to compromise. When al-Duḫī refused to provide camels for the caravan, Ahmed Paşa took his camels and his tax share by force.[128]

Then, Ahmed Paşa led an attack against the Druze leaders of Mount Lebanon and the Ḥawrān.[129] Facing this frontal attack against Druze, the leader Ismāʿīl al-Āṭraš came to the forefront as the champion of Ḥawrān's rebellion against the government. In 1860, he led the attack against Rašayā, killed the Šihāb emir and participated in the plunder and violence.[130] In Ḥāṣbayā, the attack was led by the *kethüda* of the Druze emir Ğunblāṭ,[131] who was also in direct competition with the Šihāb emirs and Christians landowners. The violence of 1860 in the Anti-Lebanon which targeted the Šihāb stronghold can be seen as reactions to a short term dynamic which is the governor Ahmed Paşa's policies. It was also linked to long term dynamics such as the general change in the balance of power between Druze and Christians in the Anti-Lebanon since the end of the 18th century.

Finally, Ahmed Paşa tackled the rebellious character of the Maydān neighborhood. In 1859, he led a full fledged attack against some neighborhood chiefs who acted as police officers and arrested them. The prisoners were judged by a mix civil and military court, and thirty-two of them were sent to Acre.[132] The participation of the Maydānī in the violence of 1860 can be linked to this earlier affront to their leadership by the governor.

The events of 1860 can be seen partly as a consequence of the harsh policies of Ahmed Paşa vis a vis Druze, Ḥarfūš, Bedouins and Maydānī. The situation was similar to the

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[127] A.E., 18/PO/A, vol. 9, Outrey-Thouvenel, October 24th 1858.
[128] A.E., 67/CPC, vol. 5/6, Outrey-Walewski, June 21st 1858.
[129] A.E., 18/PO/A, vol. 9, Outrey-Lallemand, January 19th 1859.
[130] F.O., 195/601, Brant-Russell, June 18th 1860.
[131] Ibid.
[132] A.E., 18/PO/A, vol. 9, Outrey-Lallemand, January 14th 1859, February 14th 1859.

political conditions under the governor Namiq Paşa just before the violence of 1850. The violence can thus be considered as a rebellion towards the state. Those who had benefited from the downfall of these autonomous groups to take control in Baalbek, the Ḥawrān and the Anti-Lebanon, such as the Šihāb emirs, Christian notables and military officers were attacked by the rebels.

However, the violence, in addition to being a rebellion against the governor, had an inter-confessional aspect as the general Christian population, not just the elite, was affected by the violence and plunder in the Anti-Lebanon, the Biqāʿ and Damascus. It is the consequence of long term dynamics described in the previous chapters,[133] which led to a politicization of religious identities, but also of short term dynamics such as the Ahmed Paşa' double standard policies. Indeed, Ahmed Paşa had started his governorship with a strong hand. He had a strong status, he was the *muşir* of the army of Arabistan and assumed civil responsibilities in the absence of a governor.[134] He had brought the Ǧabal Ānṣarīya to its knees, he had arrested the Ḫarfūš, controlled the Maydān. He then turned to tackle the last issue: the collection of the payment of the *bedel-i askeri* from Christians.[135] In comparison, it seemed like an easy task. However, he ultimately failed to do so because of the opposition of some Christians.

Governors had previously tried to collect the *bedel-i askeri* in Damascus from non-Muslims. In 1856, Jewish and Christians representatives met in the Greek Orthodox patriarchate of the city and discussed the issue. They saw this tax as contrary to the decree of Islahat fermanı, which opened the ranks of the army to non-Muslims. Those present thus decided to refuse its payment. Soon after however, Jews backed down from the argument and decided to pay.[136] Some Christians wrote petitions to foreign powers claiming that they

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[133] See Chapter 5 and 6.
[134] A.E., 18/PO/A, vol. 9, Outrey-Lallemand, January 12th 1859.
[135] A.E., 18/PO/A, vol. 9, Outrey-Lallemand, February 14th 1859.
[136] A.E. 67/CPC, vol. 5/6, Outrey-Walewski, August 16th 1856.

preferred to send soldiers than to pay the *bedel-i askeri*.[137] The agitation of Christian against the *bedel-i askeri* in the mid-19th century, rather than an act of open rebellion, shows continuity with earlier complaints regarding taxation. However, the context, means of opposition and vocabulary used had changed, transforming an usual negotiation regarding taxation into what was perceived as a rebellion against the state.

Christians in Damascus rebuked the governor's demands for the payment of this tax. The French consul explains this rebellion as a consequence of the proximity with Mount Lebanon, from which news had arrived that Maronites would not pay the tax.[138] Rumors also circulated regarding the rebellion of non-Muslim communities of Aleppo who had allegedly written a letter to Damascus ensuring them that they would not pay the *bedel*.[139] They benefited from the support of some consuls in the area, such as the French consul of Beirut and the Austrian consul in Damascus.[140] The rebellion against the payment of the *bedel-i askeri* however did not attract the support of the Christian chroniclers, who were quite critical of their coreligionists and saw the rebellion as originating from the commoners.[141] As Christians elites blamed the masses for their rebellion, the petitions sent to the Ottoman central government from Christian peasants rather argued that they were in the incapacity to pay because of their elite escaping taxation through foreign protection.[142] These arguments points to the increasing participation of the larger population into local politics, a domain which had previously been dominated by the elite. Among Muslims and non-Muslim chroniclers, rebellion and violence was seen to the work of the masses, the 'ignorants' among the population.[143] As such, it reveals the elite's increasing inability to control the population

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[137] Ibid.
[138] Ibid.
[139] A.E. 67/CPC, vol 5/6, Outrey-Walewski, August 28th 1856.
[140] A.E. 67/CPC, vol 5/6, Outrey-Walewski, August 16th 1856.
[141] Mishāqah, *Murder, Mayhem*, 226; *Muḏakkirāt tārīḫīya,* 244.
[142] BOA, A.DVN.115.75, 1855-1856 ; BOA, MVL.302.100, December 30th 1856.
[143] Mishāqah, *Murder, Mayhem*, 44, 53; al- Bayṭār, ʿAbd al-Razzāq. *Ḥilyat al-bašar,* 261; al-Bouʾi, *Nubḏa Muḫtaṣara,* 122.

and function as intermediaries to diffuse conflict and violence through the traditional routes of negotiation and politics of reciprocity.

When Ahmed Paşa asked the patriarchs to pay the *bedel-i askeri,* they explained that their community would not pay but rather send men. He arrested eight Catholics and ten Orthodox. He threatened to send them to Istanbul and accused them of rebellion against the state. Christians complained to the French consul about these arrests and threats. The French consul considered this use of force as illegal and demanded that Ahmed Paşa free them, to which he agreed. He demanded instead that the leaders of each community come to sign a paper saying that they will pay.[144] The double standard in the harsh treatment of Alawis, Maydānī and Ḫarfūš on the one side and the weakness of the governor's actions against Christian rebels on the other side increased the resentment of the former towards the latter.[145]

As argued by Ussama Makdisi, popular rebellion against the elites based upon a 'subaltern' interpretation of the reforms, represented a new type of violence which he identifies at the root of sectarianism. These rebellions subverted the existing social order based on the distinction between elite and commoners. As such, such events were deeply troubling for the elites of Damascus and Mount Lebanon.[146] This event is mentioned by Mīḫāʾīl Mišāqa as a cause of the violence of 1860.[147] Some chroniclers also see in the inaction of Ahmed Paşa in 1860 a revenge against the actions of Christians a year earlier.[148]

Peter Hill analyses the transformation of the local political culture in the first part of the 19th century through the development of commoners collective political action. He interprets the increased role of commoners into what was previously the domain of elite as a consequence of the military and fiscal reforms enacted to meet support the repeated wars of

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[144] A.E., 18/PO/A, vol. 9, Outrey-Lallemand, February 14th 1859.
[145] Ibid.
[146] Makdisi, "Corrupting the Sublime Sultanate," 196.
[147] Mishāqah, *Murder, Mayhem*, 248.
[148] Šāhīn, *Ḥaṣr al-Liṯām,* 223.

the end of the 18th and early 19th century.[149] The increased taxation demands on the population as a consequence of these wars, the raising prices, and bad harvest led to economic hardship. Yet, at the same time, the expansion of trade created new economic opportunities and generated prosperity for the merchant elite. The gap between poor and rich was thus widened and its visibility was increased, which challenged the elite's legitimacy in the eyes of the commoners.[150] In addition to the widening gap between rich and poor, the question of the *bedel-i askeri* shows that for non-Muslims, the institutionalization of the *millet* system challenged the role of the traditional elites which had functioned as intermediaries with the government by favoring instead the political role of the religious leadership, at least in the first part of the 19th century. The reconstruction of communal institutions broke down the interdependence between the notables and the religious leadership. Then, as the increasing demands on the general Ottoman population fostered popular mobilization, the increasing demands of the heads of the *milel* on their flocks, such as the reforms encouraged by Patriarch Maẓlūm,[151] encouraged commoners' rebellion. The new commercial elites were not able to play the same role as the traditional elite because they lacked the same type of legitimacy and networks within their community, were often involved in a conflict with the religious leadership and relied on foreign protection to escape various responsibilities.

In the affair of the *bedel-i askeri*, Ahmed Paşa eventually agreed to negotiate and demanded to be paid only a quarter of the amount. Yet, many Christians refused and sought the help of the French and British consuls to push the government to completely renounce to apply the *bedel-i askeri*. The French and British consuls in Damascus thought that it was not prudent to do so and refused. Muslim Damascenes who observed the situation closely were shocked by this indulgence of Ahmed Paşa towards Christians given his energetic action to

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[149] Hill, "How global was the age of revolution," 12.
[150] Ibid, 12.
[151] See Chapter 2 and 3.

impose conscription and to defeat intermediaries and semi-autonomous groups.[152] Muslims resented the fact that they had to pay for the *bedel* individually for not going to the army, while Christians whose *bedel* was less than the amount demanded from Muslims, refused to pay and faced no consequences.[153] To prevent disorders and rebellions of Muslims, the French consul advised strong action on the part of Ahmed Paşa to obtain the payment of taxes from Christians.[154]

Ahmed Paşa obtained an order from the *Meclis-i vala* in Istanbul that allowed him to collect the tax by force.[155] In Istanbul, a special assembly was put together to discuss the issue of the *bedel* of Damascus. Its members came to the conclusion that the rebellion of some Christian leaders, against the orders of their patriarch, had to be considered as an act of rebellion and corruption,[156] in contradiction with the tradition.[157] The chiefs of the rebellion had to be exiled from the city.[158] The *bedel-i askeri*, being the continuation of the *ǧizya* as it compensated an exemption from military service, was considered by the government as a legitimate demand established by custom.[159] The amount itself could be negotiated but the payment could not be refused.[160] In Damascus however, negotiations were put to a halt by the arrival of the new governor Kamil Paşa, who took over the civil responsibilities of the government from Ahmed Paşa.[161] Ahmed Paşa's loss of the civil leadership might have been caused by his inability to solve the question of the *bedel*. The governor's unwillingness to punish rebels among the Christians and the important role some Greek Catholics in his

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[152] Mišāqā, *Mašhad*, 171.
[153] Ibid.
[154] A.E., 18/PO/A, vol. 9, Outrey-Thouvenel, February 14th 1859.
[155] A.E., 18/PO/A, vol. 9, Outrey-Thouvenel, February 16th 1859.
[156] « *pişrev ve fesad* ».
[157] « *yolsuz harakat* ».
[158] BOA, A.MKT.388.81, December 5th 1859.
[159] BOA, MVL.753.35, September 21st 1859; The same argument is brought forward by some peasants of Mount Lebanon to justify their refusal to pay taxes, see Makdisi, *Culture of Sectarianism,* 48.
[160] A.E., 18/PO/A, vol. 9, Outrey-Thouvenel, February 14th 1859; BOA, A.MKT.388.81, December 5th 1859. Mishāqah, *Murder, Mayhem*, 226; On negotiations regarding taxation in the Ottoman Empire see Turhan, *The Ottoman Empire,* 4 and Gara Eleni, Erdem Kabadayi and Christoph K. Neumann, eds., *Popular protest and political participation in the Ottoman Empire* : *Collective volume in honor of Prof. Suraiya Faroqhi* (Istanbul: Bilgi University Press, 2011).
[161] A.E., 18/PO/A, vol. 10, Outrey-Lallemand, March 23rd 1859.

administration reinforced the association between the *Tanzimat* state and Christians, turning them into targets of popular resentment.[162] The events of 1860 thus intertwined political rebellion and inter-confessional violence.

3.2 Rebellion and Economic Difficulties

The negotiations regarding the *bedel-i askeri* took place in a period of economic troubles for the city of Damascus. The French consul's reports got bleaker as the year 1859 advanced. After Ahmed Paşa lost the civil leadership, the administration came to a halt. Civil servants were not paid. The attacks against intermediaries had borne heavy costs on the local treasury, yet revenue was very low. The financial situation was critical.[163] The province was indebted to the central government and paid an interest of 2% by month. To increase the revenue of the province, the government increased taxes and resorted to a public loan. It took from the population and especially corporations half of the yearly tax as a loan that it promised to give back in 1861. However, the population knew that the reimbursement of the tax was hypothetical.[164] The year preceding the violence, prices went up and the currency was devalued.[165] The chronicler al-Usṭwānī also mentioned that the governor changed the currency to the lira in 1859, which had bad repercussions on the economy.[166] The French consul worried that because of economic issues and the rebellion of Christians against taxation, the Muslim population and the government officials wished for the downfall of Christians, and turned against consuls because they supported them.[167]

The fiscal reforms led to wide-scale criticism on the part of the population. On the one hand, each individual was called upon to contribute both financially and militarily to the government. On the other hand, the sultan and his court were spending conspicuously. The

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[162] A.E., 195/601, Brant-Bulwer, August 25th 1860.
[163] A.E., 18/PO/A, vol. 10, Outrey-Lallemand, November 16th 1859.
[164] A.E., 18/PO/A, vol. 9, Outrey-Lallemand, July 20th 1859.
[165] *Aḥwāl al-naṣārā*, p 3
[166] al-Usṭwānī, *Mašāhid,* 169.
[167] A.E., 18/PO/A, vol. 10, Outrey-Thouvenel, September 7th 1859.

sultan was travelling on the Mediterranean amid these economic problems. Damascenes saw this travel as causing unnecessary spending, and the French consul feared it might lead to troubles in Istanbul and to an inevitable catastrophe.[168] The discrepancy between demands made on the population and the lifestyle of the sultan caused great uproar in Istanbul but also in Damascus and contributed to his delegitimization.[169] The cost of the caravan in 1858 had also been very high because of the presence of the widow of the sultan Mahmud who accompanied it.[170] The provincial treasury was in charge of these costs, thus adding to the critical economic situation.

The agriculture was also in a critical state.[171] The year of 1859 had seen a poor harvest of grains in the countryside because of the drought. The actions of speculators made the price rise even more. It reached a crisis in February when the *mağlis* of Damascus forbade the export of wheat outside the province. It set a maximum price and sent an intermediary to collect the wheat from peasants and bring it to shops in the city. Seeing these unfavorable buying terms, peasants stopped bringing their wheat to the city. The governor thus sent police forces to take the reserves by force. Then, the *mağlis* members, who were also shop owners set a high price for the resell of wheat. Bakers and other professions who used wheat for their production rebelled. In consequence wheat could not be found in the city, leading to acts of violence.[172]

Drought and agricultural disasters which often took place in the late 1850's often led to attacks on peasants. For example, in the summer 1856 the Bedouins in the Ḥawrān could not feed their animals because of the drought. They lost the main part of their income. They thus took it upon the villages to compensate their losses of animals.[173] In his article sent to

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[168] A.E., 18/PO/A, vol. 9, Outrey-Lallemand, July 20th 1859.
[169] A.E., 18/PO/A, vol. 9, Outrey-Lallemand, September 27th 1859; F.O., PRO/30, 22/88, Pisani-Bulwer, September 27th 1859.
[170] F.O., 195/601, Brant-Alison, June 2nd 1858.
[171] A.E., 18/PO/A, vol. 10, Outrey-Thouvenel, July 17th 1859.
[172] A.E., 166/PO, Serie D/20, vol. 5, Lanusse-Lallemand, February 29th 1860.
[173] A.E. 67/CPC, vol. 5/6, Outrey-Walewski, August 1st 1856.

the newspaper *Ḥadīqāt al Āḫbār*, Mīḫāʾīl Mišāqa also described the bad situation of peasants. He deplored the abandoned villages and argued that peasants fled the land because of insecurity and bad economic conditions and left the land uncultivated, thus contributing to the food shortage. Peasants had various causes of resentments, including the increasing taxes collected by tax-farmers to whom they were increasingly indebted, yet unable to pay back because of the bad harvest.[174] These tax-farmers and other intermediaries' authority had already been challenged by the increasing involvement of the government in the countryside. These repeated attacks against their positions as intermediaries opened the space for peasants and subalterns to rebel against their authority.[175] The revolt of Keserwān in 1858 represents these dynamics. Peasants rebelled against tax-farmers by whom they felt cheated.[176] In 1858, Alawi peasants also rose against their Muslim tax-farmers in Hama and killed them.[177]

The violence in Mount Lebanon in the summer of 1860 can be seen in the continuity of these earlier rebellions. Indeed, in Mount Lebanon, taxes were collected by tax-collectors[178] chosen from among the local elites. Peasants riddled with debt and facing bad crop production could no longer bear the burden of taxation. They especially resented the privileges of the elite class of tax-collectors who managed to enrich themselves in this time of economic difficulties.[179]

In addition, the competition for influence over Mount Lebanon between the French and British consular representatives contributed to these economic tensions. Both consuls attempted to obtain the nomination of their protégé as *kaymakam* by the governor, each promising bribes that they would obtain through raising taxes. Their intervention thus worsened the economic burden on the peasants. The peasantry, faced with this increased

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[174] *Ḥadīqāt al Āḫbār,* issue 105, (Beirut), January 5th 1860
[175] Khalaf, *Civil and Uncivil,* 72.
[176] Khalaf, *Civil and Uncivil,* 72.
[177] F.O., 195/601, Brant-Alison, May 4th 1858.
[178] Mukataacı.
[179] Makdisi, *Culture of Sectarianism*, 101.

taxation due to the competition between the two rivals, revolted against their tax-collectors, the Ḥazīn shaykhs.[180]

Under the leadership of Ṭānyūs Šāhīn, Maronites peasants managed to oust the Maronite Ḥazīn shaykhs from the region in 1859. Ṭānyūs Šāhīn demanded the end of traditional privileges and the equalization of status between the elite and commoners, which he perceived as the goal of the *Tanzimat* reforms.[181] His economic rebellion was accompanied by a sectarian political project aimed at asserting Maronite domination of Mount Lebanon.[182] After ousting the Ḥazīn shaykhs, he then turned against the Druze tax-collectors in areas under the control of the Druze *kaymakam*. The peasantry was armed and supported by the clergy. Thus, the Druze tax-collectors prepared their defence by arming their irregular troops. Skirmishes followed under a tense climate between the two communities in the various regions of Mount Lebanon throughout the spring of 1860. Both sides expected an imminent attack of the other and read too much into each other's actions. Initially, Maronites from Keserwān raided Druze villages, leading to retributions form the part of the Druze. Although Druze suffered the most causalities and were put at difficulty in this battle, they eventually had the upper hand.[183]

The Muslim Šihāb Emirs of Ḥāṣbayā and Rāšayā, who had ruled Mount Lebanon and were seen as having favoured Christians over Druze during their rule, were also targeted and lost their lives or escaped to Damascus.[184] The murder of Šihāb emirs, who were part of the Ottoman administrative structure, together with the plunder of villages in the Hauran, shocked the Damascene elite, who feared the violence would now turn against the elites. In Damascus, while many among the general population saw with some degree of satisfaction the Druze attack against the Anti-Lebanon, elites of all religious denominations were worried of the

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[180] *S.C.P.F, (S.C) Siri,* vol. 18, p. 22, Giustinio Giusti, June 21st 1860.
[181] Maksidi, *Culture of Sectarianism*, 97-99.
[182] Makdisi, "Corrupting the Sublime Sultanate," 196.
[183] Ibid, 110-112, 118-120; *S.C.P.F, (S.C) Siri, v*ol. 18, p. 978, Valerga, June 20th 1860.
[184] Salibi, "The 1860 Upheaval," 192.

repercussions in case the Druze, encouraged by plunder, decided to come to Damascus to do the same.[185]

Peter Hill places the commoners rebellions of Mount Lebanon which arose as a response to the politico-economic crisis of the mid-19th century into the larger framework of the Euro-Atlantic "age of revolutions" of the late 18th and early 19th centuries which saw popular rebellions oppose the expansion of the military and revenue-extracting power of states.[186] While popular rebellions in the beginning of the 19th century were not characterized by sectarianism,[187] Ussama Makdisi argues that this popular mobilization and rebellion against elites subsequently endorsed a discourse of religious distinction, contributing to the politicization of religious identities.[188]

3.3 Mutiny

Rebellions often coincided with military mutinies and at times it was quite difficult to distinguish them.[189] These mutinies tended to occur in certain contexts, including: late pay, corrupt army commanders, long service away from home, tension between high and low ranks, inflation, debasement, artificial shortage of food, wars, or the impression that sultans violated laws of justice. The same factors were determinant of rebellion as well.[190] These elements causing resentment were all present in 1860.

Every eye witness of the violence in Damascus or in Ḥāṣbayyā, Rašayā and Zaḥle mention the inaction of the official army or its involvement in the pillage. Some attribute it to an Ottoman plot to return Mount Lebanon to central rule by creating chaos, others to the venality of certain officers.[191] However, one might consider this inaction as a type of mutiny.

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[185] al-ʾUsṭwānī, *Mashāhid,* 172.
[186] Ibid, 4.
[187] Ibid, 11.
[188] Makdisi, "Corrupting the Sublime Sultanate," 183.
[189] Ibid, 8.
[190] Ibid, 4.
[191] al-Usṭwānī, *Mašāhid,* 174; al-Bouʾi, *Nubḏa Muḫtaṣara,* 116; Mišāqā, *Tabrīya al-mathūm,* 252.

A common cause of mutiny among soldiers was dissatisfaction towards the choice of officers under which they had to serve. Some events indicate that they were resentments towards military officers in general in Damascus. In 1857, there were attacks against military officers' houses.[192] A pattern of centralization can be observed in the organization of the armed forces in the countryside where local intermediaries were replaced either by regular army officers or even foreigners.[193] When irregular troops were put under the leadership of Christian generals or officers, conflict could take place.[194] The recruitment of soldiers in *Bilād al-Šām* to serve for foreign armies created resentment as well.[195]

Military officers themselves were also harboring negative feelings towards foreign intervention. An officer called Şakir Paşa is often mentioned as particularly vehement against foreigners, probably because foreign officers were increasingly obtaining positions in the Ottoman army. Şakir Paşa arrived in Damascus in 1856 and was put in charge of the pilgrimage in 1858.[196] In 1859, he was the president of the war council of Damascus.[197] The French consul Lavalette linked Şakir Paşa's hatred towards foreigners with his resentment at the superiority of Christians since the Crimean war and the decree of 1856.[198] The French consul even accused him of having participated in the violence in Damascus in 1860, and deplored that he was not arrested with the other guilty parties. When he indicated to Fuad Paşa that Şakir Paşa should be arrested, he said that he could not do so, probably because of his high position.[199] During the 6th seance of the international commission set up to determine the guilty parties in the aftermath of the violence, the members accused Şakir Paşa of being

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[192] BOA, HR.TO.52.109, January 16th 1857.
[193] For example, Hama and Homs, which had been under the government of the Ḥarfūsh, were now entrusted to a foreign military chief: General Schwarzenberg (Emin Paşa). The French consul argued that this was a difficult position for a Christian.A.E., 18/PO/A, vol. 10, Outrey-Thouvenel, September 7th 1859. Another Hungarian refugee became general in the Army of Arabistan in 1850 although he did not even convert to Islam, A.E., 166/PO-Serie D/20, vol. 3, Valberg-French Ambassador in Istanbul, July 25th 1850.
[194] A.E., 18/PO/A, vol. 9, Outrey-Thouvenel, April 14th 1856.
[195] al-Usṭwānī, *Mašāhid,* 169.
[196] A.E., 18/PO/A, vol. 9, Outrey-Thouvenel, August 30th 1858.
[197] A.E., 166/PO-Serie D/20, vol. 5, Outrey-Ahmad Paşa, September 15th 1859.
[198] A.E., 18/PO/A, vol. 9, Outrey-Thouvenel, March 31st 1858.
[199] A.E., 18/PO/A, vol. 10, Outrey-Lavalette, August 22nd 1860.

present near the Christian neighborhood on the first night of attack and of having done nothing to prevent it. However, he was acquitted by the war council.[200]

The involvement of the soldiers during the violence of 1860 can be understood by looking at the military dynamics in the first part of the 19th century. The composition of the military forces, both official and unofficial is actually quite complex and diverse. Before the *Tanzimat*, the Ottoman government relied on professional Janissaries and to a lesser extent irregular forces led by *āǧāwāt* to maintain order and security. Members of the military establishment were part of the elite of the city of Damascus. They were involved in a myriad of economic activities. They monopolized most of the agricultural lands in the grain producing regions around Damascus and also lent money to villagers. *Āǧāwāt* also acted as patrons for the merchants who accompanied the pilgrimage.[201]

The government had favored the recruitment of outsiders for the provincial Janissaries for fear of conflicting loyalties. Yet, it was not always able to do so and many locals integrated these troops.[202] In the 17th century, after the arrival of new Janissaries from Istanbul, two forces composed the Janissaries in Damascus, the 'locals' (or *yerliyya*) and the imperial forces referred to as *kapıkul*. The leaders of the *kapıkul* were appointed directly from Istanbul.[203] The distinction between these two groups was not clear cut, and was based more on integration into the city than on ethnicity.[204] In the countryside, there were also irregular militias which were composed of autonomous bands from certain regions which were accessed by the government only with difficulty, such as Ǧabal Ḥawrān or Ǧabal Nablūs or Mount Lebanon. They were composed of ethnic groups such as Druze, Maronites, Bedouins, Turkmen, Kurds, ect. They were autonomous in that they ensured their own security and

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[200] BOA, I.MMS.020.090401, Meeting no. 9, October 26th 1860.
[201] James A. Reilly, "The End of an Era," 211.
[202] Douwes, *Arming the state,* 113.
[203] Ibid.
[204] Ibid, 114.

protection, but could also be hired by the provincial government for specific purposes.[205] They also had links to the local Janissaries (*yerliyya*). Through the *Tanzimat*, these forces were challenged and the state sought to replace them with an army based on conscription and organized police forces. Ideally, the soldiers were to be recruited and sent to a different province to avoid any prior relationship with local elements.

However, by examining the different events of violence around Damascus throughout the 19th century, it becomes clear that the government did not have the resources to form an adequate military force, with proper salaries and trained into military service, because it was only the beginning of conscription. Then, the revolts against conscription forced the government to compromise and allow soldiers to remain in their province. In some areas, when the government was unable to enforce conscription, it continued to recruit from other irregular troops, albeit temporally. For example, to subdue the Ḫarfūš leaders, rather than using the army, the government called upon Kurdish paramilitary groups under the leadership of Muḥammad Saʿīd āġā Zakarīyyāʾ.[206] The governor often used one irregular troop to subdue another. Because these irregular troops often had an ethnic basis, this strategy caused ethnic conflict afterwards.

Irregular troops, or *başıbozuk*, had multiplied since the Crimean War. The Crimean War was a test for the newly recruited military, it was also a turning point for its organization. It had given irregular soldiers the opportunity to expand their power as they were recruited into the regular troops.[207] Irregular soldiers constituted in militias were sent from communities that refused to submit to the laws of conscription and refused the common bond.[208] Unlike the regular soldiers, they remained in separate units within the regular

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[205] Ibid.

[206] A.E., 166/PO-Serie D/20, vol. 3, Basily-Titof, November 27th 1850, Annex to de Ségur- Ministre Plenipotentaire, January 14th 1851.

[207] James Reid, *Crisis of the Ottoman Empire : Prelude to Collapse, 1839-1878* (Stuttgart : Franz Steiner, 2000), 12.

[208] Ibid, 247.

army.[209] Irregulars were to provide their own horse, weapon, clothes, food and could plunder anyone who was considered an enemy.[210] The Ottoman officers were often unable to control them.[211] Irregulars thus took advantage of the war to commit plunder, which was in a way their salaries, explaining the massacres and pillages in the Balkans during the Crimean War but also in Damascus.[212] After the war, when the irregular troops were discharged from the army, they were left with no resources from the government and resorted to continue to plunder the countryside.

During the *Tanzimat*, new institutions were created to centralize the use of force and get rid of these irregular troops. The Janissaries and irregular cavalry troops had previously been used as policemen to ensure order in the city.[213] It was especially the role of the irregular deli troops, led by a *deli-başı* and paid by the governor. These duties fell under the Ministry of War. These groups saw their positions threatened by the creation of a new police force in 1846. After the abolition of the Janissaries, new police forces were created in the capital. In 1845, a *tezkere* ordered the creation of a police force under the authority of the Tophane-i Amire Muşiri[214] to ensure security and order in Istanbul. In 1846 a *nizamname* established the Zabtiye Muşiriyeti as an independent directorate in charge of the police forces, the *zabtiye,* in the city and the provinces. The maintaining of order was thus no longer a function of the Ministry of War. In the provinces, the police agents were to be nominated by the provincial *mağlis*, which allowed its members to chose individuals from among their own networks.[215]

In Damascus, the competition to obtain such a position was high. The police forces of the city were first entrusted to the Irish mercenary Eugene O'Reilly, who took the name of

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[209] Ibid, 156.
[210] Ibid, 106.
[211] Ibid, 267.
[212] Ibid, 112.
[213] F.O., 195/291, Wood-Canning, June 20th 1849.
[214] Noémi Lévy-Aksu, *Ordre et désordres dans l'Istanbul ottomane (1879-1909). De l'Etat au quartier* (Paris: Karthala, 2013), 128.
[215] Ibid, 130.

Ḥassan Bey al Maǧar. The fact that the police force which sought to replace the Janissaries was led by a foreigner must have created resentment on the part some of the *āǧāwāt* who already opposed the creation of such a force. However, the successor to O'Reilly was a man of considerable influence among the *yerliyya*: the *āǧā* Muṣṭafā al-Ḥawāṣilī. After being pensioned from the army he was put in charge of the *zabtiye* (police) force in the city.[216] Muṣṭafā al-Ḥawāṣilī was influential in the Christian neighborhood of Bāb Tūmā where he resided. His estate was considerable, he was involved in a variety of trades, including barley, coffee, livestock, silk and cloth.[217] Muṣṭafā al-Ḥawāṣilī was indebted towards Christian notables and money lenders of Bāb Tūmā.[218] He was protected by the British consul Wood who had helped him build his fortune.[219]

The *zaptiye* recruited from among the unemployed irregulars.[220] These forces were used to maintain order during the violence of 1860 but they were afterwards accused of committing crimes.[221] Indeed, just before the violence of Damascus in 1860, the governor Ahmed Paşa called irregular troop leaders such as Ṣaliḥ āǧā al-Mahāyinī of the Maydān, ʿAbd al-Laṭīf āǧā, the Kurdish *āǧā* of Ṣālḥiye Muḥammad Saʿīd Bey and his son Ismāʿīl āǧā Šamdīn, together with the chief of the *zabtiye*, Muṣṭafā al-Ḥawāṣilī.[222] They were to gather their irregular troops and the *zabitye* to ensure the security of the city. These were the police forces that were sent to guard the Christian quarter. Apparently when these forces were sent to guard Bāb Tūmā, the population knew that trouble was coming for they were known for their

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[216] He was the son of Nassif Paşa, a descendant of the ʿAẓm family who had fought against Général Kléber in Egypt. He had been promised the government of Damascus by Cezzar Paşa, who instead betrayed him and arrested him. He eventually escaped to Damascus. Nassif Paşa owned a large house in Hama and received a large pension from the state; Ibid, 326; Josiah Conder, *The modern traveller : a description, geographical, historical, and topographical, of the various countries of the globe, vol. 2* (London : James Duncan, 1827), 28; Salibi, "The 1860 Upheaval," 189; Schilcher, *Families in Politics*, 95.

[217] Grehan, *Everyday Life,* 77.

[218] Fawaz, *An Occasion for War,* 142.

[219] A.E., 166/PO-Serie D/20, vol. 5, Outrey-Lavalette, August 16th 1860; Schilcher, *Families in Politics,* 92.

[220] Salibi, "The 1860 Upheaval", 189.

[221] F.O., 196/601, Mishaqa-Brant, January 27th 1858.

[222] Salibi, "The 1860 Upheaval,"189. Lütfi, *Vak'a-nüvis,* 19.

tendency to plunder.[223] The British consul Brant wrote that these troops were first sent to Ḥāṣbayā and Rašayā, engaged in plunder and then were assigned to Bāb Tūmā, which he considered to be a mistake for they originated from the city and were embedded in local power struggles. According to the British consul, Ahmed Paşa used these troops because he was scared that they might turn against him and wanted to keep them at bay while relying on his own soldiers for his protection.[224]

Ṣāliḥ āġā al-Mahāyinī was a military chieftain from the Maydān neighborhood. He sat on the *maǧlis*. His family was involved in grain trade,[225] and was part of the *āšrāf*. He had family links with the Naqšbandī Ḥassan al-Bayṭār.[226] He apparently forbade attacks against the Maydān Christians.[227] However, he was also accused to have encouraged his Kurdish soldiers to commit violence against Christians in Bāb Tūmā. After the violence he was hung on order of Fuad Paşa.[228] The fact that the same individual prevented aggression against the less fortunate Christian of the Maydān while encouraging violence against their wealthy coreligionists of Bāb Tūmā points to the class aspect within this dynamic of inter-confessional violence.

The Kurdish āġā from Ṣālḥiye, Muḥammad Saʿīd āġā Šamdīn was in charge of irregular troops in the Ḥawrān in 1858.[229] In his memoirs, Mikhāʾīl Mishāqa accuses the Kurds to have killed hundreds of Christians. He particularly accused his son Ismāʿīl āġā Šamdīn and Farḥāt āġā.[230] Muḥammad Saʿīd āġā Šamdīn had had issues with Mikhāʾīl Mishāqa, the British dragoman, because of a repayment of debts that Šamdīn tried to avoid.

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[223] F.O., 195/601, Mishaqa-Brant, January 27th 1858.
[224] F.O., 78/1520, Brant-Bulwer, August 30th 1860.
[225] Weismann, *Taste of Modernity*, 208.
[226] Ibid.
[227] Abkāriyūs, *Kitāb Nawādir,* 256.
[228] al-Usṭwānī, *Mašāhid,* 185.
[229] F.O., 195/601, Mishaqa-Brant, January 27th 1858.
[230] Mišāqā, *Mašhad*, 178.

The issue involving the British consul dragged for years.[231] The fact that these various *āġāwāt* were indebted to Christians might have had a role to play in the outcome of plunder.

The Kurds from Ṣālḥiye indeed feature as main actors in the various accounts of the violence. In the beginning of June, a month before the massacres of Damascus, the irregular troops of Ṣālḥiye had joined the Ḥawrāni Druze in the attack against Christian villages in Mount Lebanon.[232] Then, the first days of the attack of Damascus from the 9th to the 12th of July 1860 consisted mostly of plunder but little loss of life. The situation got worse however on the 3rd day of the violence, when the Kurdish inhabitants of Ṣālḥiye came down from their neighbourhood to the city. From that point onwards, the violence reached unprecedented levels.[233] Five hundred Kurds from Ṣālḥiye came to the city center because they were told that the house of the *'alim* ʿAbdallah Ḥalabī had been attacked by Christians.[234] They were apparently led by Ismāʿīl āġā Šamdīn.[235] According to the chronicler of *Kitāb al-Āḥzān*, al-Ḥalabī had rather called his students from Ṣālḥiye claiming that the Omayyad mosque had been put on fire by Christians. According to the chronicler, he did so to foster violence towards Christians.[236]

It was also on this day that an incident took place. Some Christians builders were employed in a house. Firemen came to the house to put off the fire, but the employees thought they were plunderers and killed them. At that point, the violence morphed into murders.[237] The British consul mentioned that everyone was scared of the violence, Muslims also worried that Druze would kill those who had protected Christians.[238]

In the aftermath of the violence of 1860, Fuad Paşa came to Damascus to reestablish order and punish the guilty parties. He arrested many members of the *zabtiye* and their

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[231] F.O., 195/601, Mishaqa-Brant, January 27th 1858.
[232] A.E., 166/PO-Serie D/20, vol. 5, Lanusse-Lavalette, June 6th 1860.
[233] A.E., 18/PO/A, vol. 10, Outrey-Lavalette, August 22nd 1860.
[234] Mišāqā, *Mašhad*, 177.; al-Usṭwānī, *Mašāhid,* 175.
[235] al-Usṭwānī, *Mašāhid,* 185.
[236] *Kitāb al-āḥzān,* 37-38.
[237] F.O., 195/601, Brant-Bulwer, July 11th 1860.
[238] Ibid.

aforementioned leaders. One of the first measures adopted by Fuad Paşa during his rule of Syria under martial law was the creation and financing of a Syrian police directly under his orders.[239] He thus identified that the mode of recruitment of the *zabtiye* was problematic. The leader of the *zaptiye*, Muṣṭafā al-Ḥawāṣilī[240] was arrested together with his brother ʿAlī Bey, his nephew and Ḥassan Bey. His *zabtiye* troops were either executed or sent to the army.[241]

One might wonder why irregular troops had been used to maintain order, given the attacks against their chieftains through the mid-19th century? Horshid Paşa, the governor of Beirut, had also recruited *başıbozuk* from Akkar (Tripoli) to function as police in Beirut.[242] The governor Ahmed Paşa had to resort to the recruitment of irregular troops because 3/4th of the army of Arabistan had been sent away to help the war effort in the Balkans.*[243]* The author of *Aḥwāl al-Naṣārā* mentioned that when the conflict took place in Mount Lebanon and Christians asked for the help of the government, the troops had already been sent away.[244]

That the attack of 1860 took place after the departure of the troops to the Balkans is not a coincidence. Why did the two governors, both of Beirut and Damascus fail to act strongly as they had done with conscription? Ahmed Paşa had been quite active in his combined role of *muşir*[245]/governor in January. However, a new civil governor arrived in March 1859 and thus Ahmed Paşa was demoted of his civil functions, to the great regret of the French consul. After that he was not able to continue on the same path.[246] In addition, it turns out that Ahmed Paşa was also deposed from his position of *muşir*. A document found in the Ottoman archives brings some light to this issue. It is a letter by the Grand Vizier to the sultan demanding the replacement of Ahmed Paşa as *muşir* of the army of Arabistan with

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[239] Leila Hudson, *Transforming Damascus : space and modernity in an Islamic city*, *Library of Middle East history* (London ; New York: Tauris Academic Studies, 2008), 19.
[240] Fawaz, *An Occasion for War,* 142.
[241] Salibi, *The 1860 Upheaval*, 189.
[242] *Les massacres du Mont Liban*, 23
[243] *Aḥwāl al-naṣārā,* 22; *Les massacres du Mont Liban*, 18.
[244] *Aḥwāl al-naṣārā,* 32
[245] Military leader of the army.
[246] A.E., 166/PO-Serie D/20, vol. 5, Outrey-Lallemand, March 23rd 1859.

Abdülhamid Paşa, because of concerns about Mount Lebanon. Ahmed Paşa was to be given the title of *muşir* of the army of Anatolia, replacing Abdülkerim Paşa who was to leave for retirement. New battalions were to be sent to the new *muşir* of Arabistan.[247] Before this official order which arrived one day before the violence, a letter containing the same information had arrived on June 20th.[248] Ahmed Paşa was actually the one who had asked to resign because of the dismissal of his troops. The authorization had been given to him in the beginning of June, but he was to stay put until the appointment of a new governor and a new *muşir*.[249] An eye-witness account of the violence ensured that the governor of Damascus Ahmed Paşa and the governor of Beirut Hurşit Paşa wrote to Istanbul about the lack of security of the region but that Istanbul failed to answer.[250] The Ottoman government had the habit of concentrating its army alternatively on certain regions, leaving a void behind. This situation explains his inaction in the face of violence.

The rest of the army which had not been sent away to the Balkans had not been paid since twenty-four months and was suffering from lack of food.[251] The newly recruited soldiers which completed the army forces were also natives to the region and had been stationed close to home for their first year. Their participation in the plunder might thus be understood as a way to recover their salaries. When soldiers were not paid by the state, they usually ransacked the population.[252] The French commissaries to the commission set up after the violence rightfully remarked that the violence only took place in cities or villages where army garrisons were present.[253] Then, the rebellion versus taxation on the part of the Christian population fostered resentment from soldiers. Indeed, the *bedel-i askeri* had been

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[247] BOA, A.AMD.92.72, July 8th 1860.
[248] F.O., 195/601, Brant-Bulwer, June 20th 1860.
[249] BOA, A.MKT.409.14, July 5th 1860; Fawaz, *An Occasion for War*, 145.
[250] *Les massacres du Mont Liban*, 18.
[251] A.E., 18/PO/A, vol. 10, Outrey-Thouvenel, November 16th 1859; Sinan Kuneralp, *Ottoman diplomatic documents on "the Eastern question"* (Istanbul : Isis Press, 2009), 22.
[252] James Silk Buckingham, *Travels among the Arab Tribes Inhabiting the Countries East of Syria and Palestine* (London, Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme, Brown, and Green, 1825), 379; Alain Blondy, *Chrétiens et Ottomans de Malte et d'ailleurs* (Paris: Editions PUPS, Paris Sorbonne, 2013), 783.
[253] BOA, I.MMS.020.0904, Meeting no. 1, October 9th 1860.

attributed in the provincial budget for the payment of the soldiers. In 1857, a letter was sent by the Damascene *maǧlis* to the central government. It highlighted the fact that because Christians did not pay the *bedel,* soldiers could not receive their salaries.[254] A direct link was thus made between the lack of payment by Christians and the late salaries of soldiers, which explains in part their role in the violence of 1860.

The central government worried about the role of the army in the violence as we can see in a letter sent to the governor of Erzurum and the *muşir* of the Army of Anatolia just after the violence of 1860 to inform them that secret agents would be sent to Erzurum in order to prevent the occurrence of events resembling what took place in Damascus.[255] Why was Erzurum, miles away from Damascus, at risk of seeing the same violence than in Damascus? It had a large Armenian population, but most importantly it was often the headquarters of the Army of Doğu Anatolia (4th)[256], just as Damascus was the camp for the Army of Arabia.[257] Similar orders were sent to the sub-governor of Adana, asking to increase the number of *zabtiye* to avoid a similar situation as in Damascus.[258] The presence of the headquarters of the army in these cities was thus seen by the central state as one of the underlying causes of the violence, mostly because of the poor state of the military and the lack of payment of soldiers, which put them at risk of mutiny.

In conclusion, the introduction of universal taxation and conscription challenged existing hierarchies and caused rebellion in various regions of the Ottoman Empire. The tax reforms were vehemently opposed by the population. While the issue at stake was the taxation of the elite, notables managed to escape it through the newly created institutions of the *Tanzimat* or through foreign protection, leaving the burden of the tax to fall upon the less

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[254] BOA, I.MMS.11.437, September 26th 1857.
[255] A.MKT.UM.424.16, September 1st 1860.
[256] Although officially it was supposed to be quartered in the nearby town of Erzincan.
[257] Carter Vaughn Findley, *Ottoman Civil Officialdom: A Social History* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1989), 283.
[258] A.MKT.MHM.194.4, September 5th 1860; A.MKT.UM.428.52, October 24th 1860.

wealthy. However, this class dimension was soon turned into an inter-confessional conflict through the discourses and strategies of Christian and Muslim elites. Then, the centralization of military power in the hands of governors threatened the livelihood of *āġāwāt* who had operated semi-autonomously in the countryside and built patron-client relationship with villages. The revolt of 1850 which spanned across *Bilād al-Šām* contested these transformations of state-society relations. During these times of political upheaval, Christians increasingly sought to rely on foreign consuls or the governor for protection, which proved ineffective in times of violence. The strong attacks of Ahmed Paşa against *āġāwāt* and semi-autonomous groups contrasted with the lenience he displayed towards Christians who rebelled against the payment of the *bedel-i askeri*. This double-standard exacerbated resentments towards both the governor and Christians who were perceived as the new elite which could rebel without consequences. Then, the association made between the lack of payment of the *bedel-i askeri* and the late payment of the soldiers explains the participation of soldiers in the violence.

In this thesis, I aimed to analyze how socio-political changes affected inter-confessional relations in Ottoman Damascus from 1760 to 1860. Through a diachronic approach, a cross-reading of various primary sources and a micro-historical approach which focused on the city of Damascus, this research revealed the interaction between internal dynamics of religious communities and inter-confessional relations. First, we will address the main argument of this thesis. We will then present its findings, point to limitations and provide directions for further research. Finally, we will highlight the implications of this study.

1. Main Argument

Through the exploration of dynamics pertaining to three social groups in Damascus, Greek Catholics, Jews and members of the *ṭarīqa* Naqšbandīya-Ḫalidīya, this thesis argued that sociopolitical changes over the time period under study affected inter-confessional relations through the interplay of two dynamics. First, the long term development of confessional cultures reinforced the borders between religious communities. It heightened confessional consciousness among Ottoman Christians, Jews and Muslims. Then, in the 19th century this process was intensified through the *Tanzimat* reforms, the institutionalization of the *millet* system, and increased foreign intervention, which polarized the population along religious lines. In addition to structural changes, the interplay of social and political actors who instrumentalized sectarian discourses as tools of power contributed to the politicization of religious identities. These dynamics led to conflicts between Christians and Muslims, but also between Christians and Jews, and among Christian communities. The internal construction of religious communities in this period also shaped inter-confessional tensions. The nature of the elite of non-Muslim communities changed as a new merchant class replaced the traditional lay

leadership of the communities. The new elite among both Jews and Greek Catholics did not benefit from the same level of legitimacy than the traditional leadership among the population. They were not embedded in the same patronage networks across religious borders and rather relied on foreign powers' protection. It led to a crisis of authority among non-Muslim communities which prevented traditional elites from functioning as intermediaries and from reducing inter-confessional tensions. The religious leadership of non-Muslim communities was also strengthened by the reforms in the first part of the 19th century. However, its increasing authority and interventions into the lives of their flock met with strong resistances and even rebellion. Furthermore, the Ottoman *Tanzimat* reforms challenged the traditional intermediaries of urban and rural politics who stood in the way of the centralization of power and resources. In consequence of this crisis of representation and authority among all religious communities, consensual elite politics were replaced by a popular form of political mobilization which emphasized sectarian understandings of society and presented power relations between religious groups as a zero-sum game. It contributed to the confessionalization of Ottoman society as religious identities became the basis of conflicting claims of access to resources. This heightened confessional consciousness and the politicization of religious identities led to events of inter-confessional and intra-confessional violence in the mid-19th century.

2. Findings

In chapter one, I analyze the development of confessional cultures among Christians, Jews and Muslims since the 17th century. This process involved the intensification of doctrine, the reinforcement of religious borders, and the homogenization of practices and norms. I highlight similar developments among Christians, Jews and Muslims such as projects of religious reforms. Among Muslims, I focus on the political and spiritual influence of the charismatic leader of the Naqšbandīya-Ḫalidīya, Shaykh Ḫālid, who played an important role

in Damascene politics. His program of reform, supported by the Ottoman government in the first part of the 19ᵗʰ century, contributed to the politicization of the Muslim population on religious grounds. It identifies the social and political role of non-Muslims as a source of weakness of the Ottoman Empire in this period of military defeats and internal secession.

Among Christians, I explore similar reform movements, either under missionary influence or as a result of internal impetus, which encouraged separation and distinction among religious groups. The development of confessional cultures was intensified by the schism between Orthodox and Catholic churches in the 18ᵗʰ century. Chapter two explores the separation of the Greek Catholic Church from the Greek Orthodox Church which was followed by a competition for followers, recognition and ecclesiastical resources between the two clergies. In addition to defining their identity in regards to the Greek Orthodox Church, Greek Catholics had to find their place in the Catholic world by emphasizing their distinction from Latin missionaries. These conflicts between Christian communities increased their visibility in the public realm. Demonstration of prestige, building of luxurious places of worship, and displays of alliances with foreign powers were often intended to increase the status of the Church in the eyes of the flock or to impress rival Christian communities. However, these displays were interpreted by the Muslim population as provocations and as political statements, thereby causing inter-confessional tensions.

The 19ᵗʰ century saw the culmination of this long term development of confessional cultures with the institutionalization of the *millet* system as part of the *Tanzimat* reforms. Chapter three and four analyze how these transformations increased the authority of patriarchs and *hahambaşılar* and encouraged the centralization of resources within the religious institutions. It challenged the existing system of overlapping forms of communal authority. Traditional elites were replaced by new merchant elites relying on foreign protection. The political role of this new elite caused resentments both within and outside the community. The

institutionalization of the *millet* system was accompanied by an effort to emphasize separation and distinction from other communities. These reforms led to widespread resistances which highlighted the politicization of different forms of belonging such local identity, class, kinship and ʿaṣabīya, which became alternative bases for claims of access to resources. These internal divisions fostered the intervention of a variety of outside actors, such as the Ottoman government, foreign consuls and missionaries, who were instrumentalized by various actors in this struggle over institutional power. This observation emphasizes the agency of local actors rather than presenting them as passive pawns of foreign imperialism.

Chapter five and six turn to structural changes in the 19th century. The *Tanzimat* and especially the Islahat Fermanı of 1856 upset the social order of Ottoman society by abolishing various privileges and granting equal legal and political rights to non-Muslims. This transformation of social hierarchies was perceived as a loss of status and as a humiliation by many Muslims. It gave rise to resentments against both Christians and foreign powers, seen as the instigators and main beneficiaries of the reforms. Chapter five analyzes how these larger imperial transformations were articulated locally through the specificities of the context of Damascus. Historical precedents, such as the Egyptian rule of the city, affected the perception of the reforms as a zero-sum game between religious communities. Because of their role during the Egyptian period and their political influence in the following years, the Greek Catholic elite became the focus of popular resentments.

The transformation of the status of non-Muslims in the empire, and especially the abolition of *ǧizya*, put an end to the social contract of the *ḏimma*. It led to inter-confessional tensions exemplified by the mention of the abolition of the *ǧizya* as a justification for the attack against the Christian quarter of Damascus in the summer of 1860. Chapter six showed that they were various opinions among Damascene ulema regarding the status of the *ḏimma* after the abolition of the *ǧizya*. However, because of the delegitimization of the elite ulema

and the popularity of *ṭarīqa* leaders such as Shaykh Ḫālid, the opinion which claimed that the protection of non-Muslims had been abolished resonated more among the population.

In addition to structural changes at the level of the empire, chapter seven explores how the advantages granted to non-Muslims under foreign protection in trade, tax-farming and land-ownership put them in competition with traditional power holders such as ulema, *āšrāf*, notables and *āġāwāt* in Damascus. Sectarian discourses were used as tools of power in this economic competition. Interpersonal conflicts were used by foreign consuls and governors in their bid for influence, turning them into diplomatic conflicts which in turn polarized the population. This chapter underlines the agency of local actors in shaping the applications of the reforms in the provinces and using them to further their own position.

Through a case study of the division of the Greek Catholic community regarding the adoption of the Gregorian calendar presented in chapter eight, I show that, through the institutionalization of the *millet* system, religious distinction became the basis of claims of access to communal resources. The internal divisions of the Greek Catholics were used by outside actors as tools of influence in the region. At the same time, local Greek Catholics invited and instrumentalized the intervention of outside actors to further their own power over the institutions of the Church. It led to a conflict of jurisdiction between foreign consuls, Rome and the Ottoman government which politicized the Greek Catholic religious identity. This affair also pointed to the increasing role of commoners in community affairs. This dramatic division of the community led to a crisis of authority which prevented the patriarch to function as an intermediary with the state and to collect taxes. It caused the hostility of the governor and popular resentments among Muslims of the city.

Greek Catholics also played an important role in the repeated accusations of blood libels against Jews in the mid-19th century. Chapter nine analyzed the increasing confessional consciousness of Greek Catholics and Jews in Damascus. The local competition for access to

resources between the elites of the two groups, events on the imperial scale, and foreign intervention led to the development of sectarian discourses.

Chapter ten showed that the *Tanzimat* reforms' attacks on intermediaries as well as the introduction of new forms of taxation led to a change of societal hierarchies and encouraged commoners to challenge to the authority and privileges of the elite. This dynamic was observable within religious communities' institutions and in the society at large. The elites attempted to diffuse tensions between social classes by turning them into inter-confessional conflicts.

Rather than analyzing the violence solely in confessional terms, the events of 1860 have to be read in the continuity of rebellions against taxation and conscription in the first part of the 19th century. The Damascene governor's double standards in the policies he adopted in regards to Christians and Muslims contributed to the perception that Christians had a great influence on the Ottoman government. His weakness and compromising attitude in the treatment of the Greek Catholics and Greek Orthodox who had rebelled against the *bedel-i askeri* contrasted with the harsh measures used against *āġāwāt* and other intermediaries. It caused resentments towards both the governor and Christians, shaping the inter-confessional form of the rebellion of 1860. Inter-confessional relations are thereby a by-product of state-society relations. The political influence on the governor of a group of Greek Catholic merchants simultaneously under foreign protection and employed in the provincial administration also played a role in the immediate causes of the attack against the Christian quarter of Damascus in 1860. Discontent towards the reforms and provincial governor were thereby redirected towards Christians, and especially towards Greek Catholics who had come to assume a predominant political role in the city.

3. Limitations and Further Research

Analyzing inter-confessional relations over a century forced me to make some choices regarding the types of interactions addressed in this research. The various sources guided me by pointing to aspects of inter-confessional relations that they deemed relevant.

I chose to focus on three main social groups and to explore inter-confessional relations over a century. Thereby, I do not claim to encompass the whole range of inter-confessional relations in the city of Damascus, but rather to highlight the interaction between the construction of communities, the transformation of religious identification and inter-confessional relations. In the same manner, the focus on the specific context of Damascus did not allow me to compare with other cities and regions, restricting my ability to generalize certain conclusions of this research for other contexts. Instead, I highlighted the specificities of the local context in shaping the understanding of the socio-political transformations of Ottoman society and the applications of the reforms. However, the occurrence of various cases of inter-confessional violence in various cities in the mid-19th century hint at the general transformation of inter-confessional relations across the empire. An analysis of these various events of violence through the lense of the interaction between internal communal dynamics and inter-confessional relations would further our understanding of the transformation of Ottoman society in the *Tanzimat* period.

I was able to analyze a variety of internal dynamics of Greek Catholics and Jews. However, I was able to consult more sources on Greek Catholic than Jews, in part because of my lack of knowledge of Hebrew, but also because of the lack of comparable sources available. I was thereby able to delve more into the case of the former than the latter. However, the comparison between the two communities allowed me to highlight similar dynamics.

My work in the archives of the Congregation of the Propaganda Fide and the Archivio Segreto was fruitful, but I was not able to consult the archives relating to other Catholic

communities such as the Maronite, Syriac Catholic and Armenian Catholics of Damascus. A comparison with these archives would further shed light on the interactions and competition between Catholic communities.

A comparison with Greek Orthodox internal dynamics would also have completed this analysis of inter-confessional relations. However, I was not able to do so given the difficult, if not impossible, access to Russian archives and to the archives of the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate in Beirut. Church archives could have provided another possible source of information on the history of the various Christian Churches present in Damascus. However, due to the political situation in Syria since the beginning of my thesis, I have not been able to access them. In any case, these sources are not as abundant and systematic as the archives consulted for this research.

While I consulted the court records of Damascus, I have not made an extensive use of it for this thesis, mainly because I have found limited information regarding non-Muslims in the various volumes I consulted, which concern sales and purchases. The documents I consulted confirmed my initial hypothesis of the growing activity of Christian and Jewish protégés in the purchase of properties around the city. However, these dynamics deserve to be explored further to highlight the economic strategies of Ottoman Christians and Jews in rural Syria, which have not been addressed by previous research.

Similarly, the Ottoman archives are extremely rich and I could not consult all the documents relevant to Damascus to the same extend that I did with the French and British archives as well as the archives of the Congregation of the Propaganda Fide. As a consequence, I used extensively consular and missionary archives for this research. However, I critically analyzed them through the perspectives gained from chronicles and Ottoman archives which allowed me to challenge narratives and assumptions underlying these archives' analysis of Ottoman society.

I ended my study of Ottoman Damascus with the violence of 1860. However, I came upon information regarding the transformation of the Greek Catholic community after the violence. Further research should be conducted to analyze how violence affected the self-identification of Greek Catholics and their political role in the city. It would also be interesting to see how the influx of charity which followed the massacre affected the balance of power between various institutions within the Greek Catholic community.

4. Implications

This research contributes to the study of inter-confessional relations in various contexts by pointing to the importance of internal constructions of community. In addition, this research provides additional insights about the history of the Ottoman Empire in the 19th century and especially about the *Tanzimat* period by shedding light on the reception of the reforms in the specific socio-political context of Damascus. Then, the case studies of the internal dynamics of Greek Catholics, Jews and the analysis of the socio-political role of *ṭarīqa* Naqšbandīya contributes to improve our knowledge of these social groups. Furthermore, this research casts a new light on the attack against the Christian quarter of Damascus in 1860. These events of violence occupy an important place in the collective memory of inter-confessional relations in Syria. The remembering of the violence is revived by the increasing occurrences of inter-confessional violence in the contemporary Middle East, shaping the constant re-imagination of the Syrian nation. These collective memories are instrumentalized for a variety of political projects and to give faith to various narratives of the nation either in the Syrian context or abroad. This research which analyzes the transformation of inter-confessional relations over time and highlights the underlying dynamics of the violence of 1860 challenges sectarian historical narratives that play an important role in the articulation of inter-confessional relations in the contemporary Middle East. By contextualizing this traumatizing event, historical research creates a distance from sectarian

representations of the past and provides a new basis for the re-imagination of collective identifications and narratives.[1]

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[1] On the relation between history and memory see Paul Ricoeur, *La mémoire, l'histoire, l'oubli* (Paris: Seuil, 2003).

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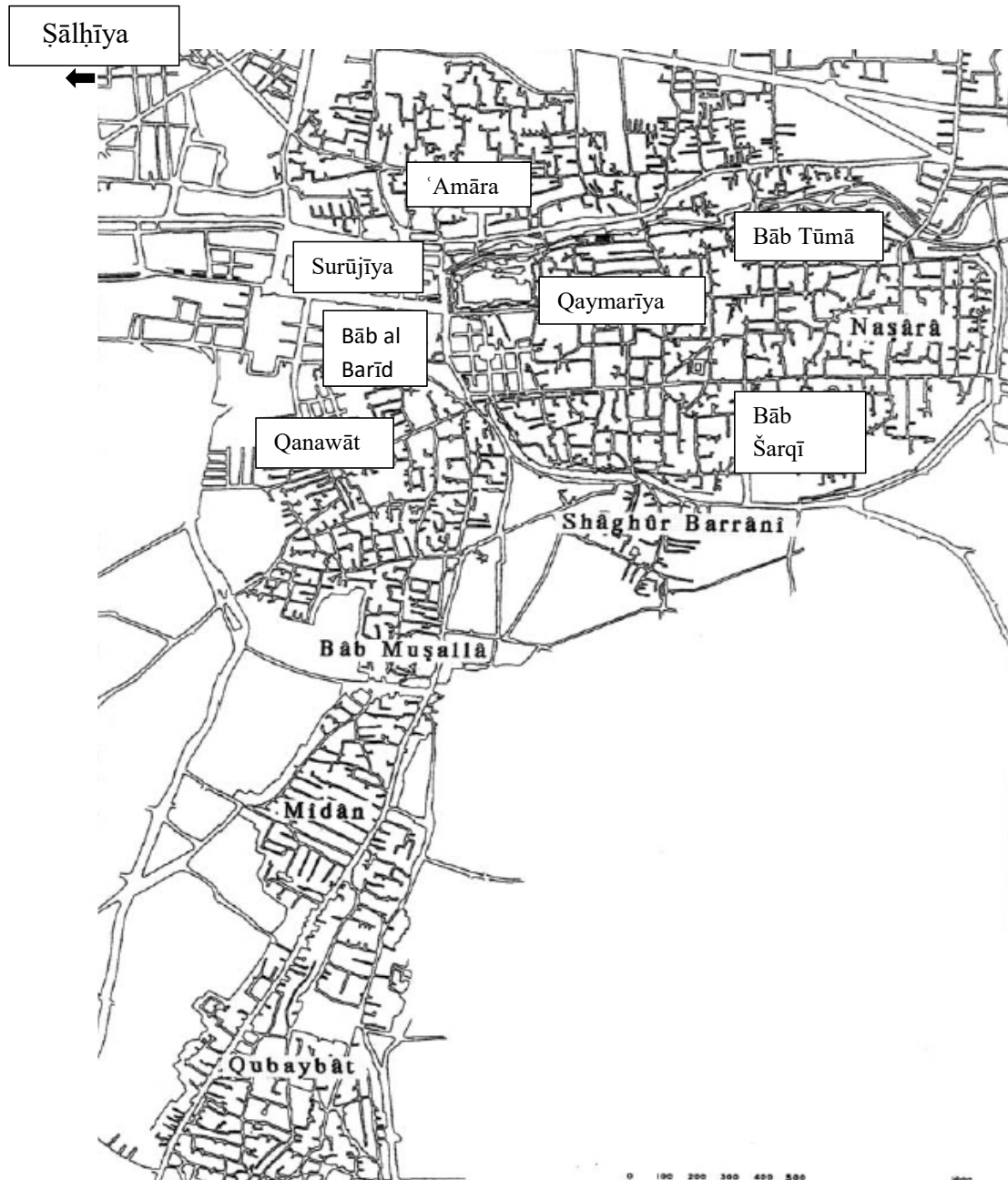
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Anaïs Massot was born 03/02/1988 in Grasse, France. After completing an Associate degree in Peace and Conflict Resolution at Mira Costa College in Oceanside, California, she transferred to McGill University in Montreal, Canada, and completed in 2010 a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science with a minor in International Development. In 2012, she received a Research Masters' degree in Area Studies: Middle East and Asia with *cum laude* from Leiden University, Netherlands. In 2013, she completed a Master 2 degree at the Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales, France, in Religious and Social Sciences. She started her PhD research in 2013 involving a co-supervision between the Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales and Leiden University. To conduct her research, she received a PhD scholarship from the PRES (Pole de Recherche et d'Enseignement Supérieur) HESAM (Hautes Etudes-Sorbonne-Arts et Metiers) within the Program Paris Nouveau Monde. She received a scholarship from the Ecole Française de Rome to conduct archival work in the Archives of the Vatican and the Congregation of the Propaganda Fide in Rome.

PROPOSITIONS

1. The way the various Damascene Christian, Jewish and Muslim communities were imagined and constructed in relation to socio-political changes affected inter-confessional relations in the city.

2. The long term dynamic of the construction of confessional cultures in the Ottoman Empire since the 17th century was intensified in the 19th century through the *Tanzimat* reforms and foreign intervention, leading to the confessionalization of Ottoman society and ultimately to inter-confessional strife. The analysis of the decades preceding the violence of 1860 that targeted some Damascene Christians reveals an increasing politicization of religious identifications.

3. Damascene Christians and Jews were not passive actors of the *Tanzimat* reform period but rather employed their agency to shape the local society in this period of social, economic and political transformations. They used their patron-client relationships with governors, local power-holders and foreign representatives as tools of power within their own community institutions or in the wider Damascene political sphere.

4. As the rise of the modern state changed the rules of access to resources, elite politics were replaced by popular mobilization. In this context, sectarian discourses were used by Damascenes of all religious groups as tools in the struggle for access to economic and political resources.

5. The two different traditions of religious history and social history, which differ in approaches and types of sources, can be bridged to address the interaction between socioeconomic transformations and religious dynamics.

6. Cross-cutting forms of belonging tend to weaken the political relevance of religious communities, ensuring some level of inter-confessional coexistence.

7. Inter-confessional relations can be deconstructed by looking at the internal divisions of religious communities which question the perception of communities as entities.

8. Cross-reading of various types of sources on a specific context allows for a micro-historical approach which highlights the agency of individuals in shaping the local structural transformations.

9. Admission of our limitations is an important step in the pursuit of academic knowledge.

10. Working in the historical archives is a transformative experience for a historian. One always finds more than what one was looking for. Yet, the importance of archives is not enough emphasized in our training.