



Universiteit
Leiden
The Netherlands

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

Massot, A.K.J.M.

Citation

Massot, A. K. J. M. (2021, January 26). *Socio-political changes, confessionalization, and inter-confessional relations in Ottoman Damascus from 1760 to 1860*. Retrieved from <https://hdl.handle.net/1887/3134736>

Version: Publisher's Version

License: [Licence agreement concerning inclusion of doctoral thesis in the Institutional Repository of the University of Leiden](#)

Downloaded from: <https://hdl.handle.net/1887/3134736>

Note: To cite this publication please use the final published version (if applicable).

Cover Page



Universiteit Leiden



The handle <https://hdl.handle.net/1887/3134736> holds various files of this Leiden University dissertation.

Author: Massot, A.K.J.M.

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

Issue Date: 2021-01-26

ABSTRACT AND KEYWORDS

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.