

OTTOMAN REFORM
IN SYRIA
AND PALESTINE

1840-1861

*The Impact of the Tanzimat
on Politics and Society*

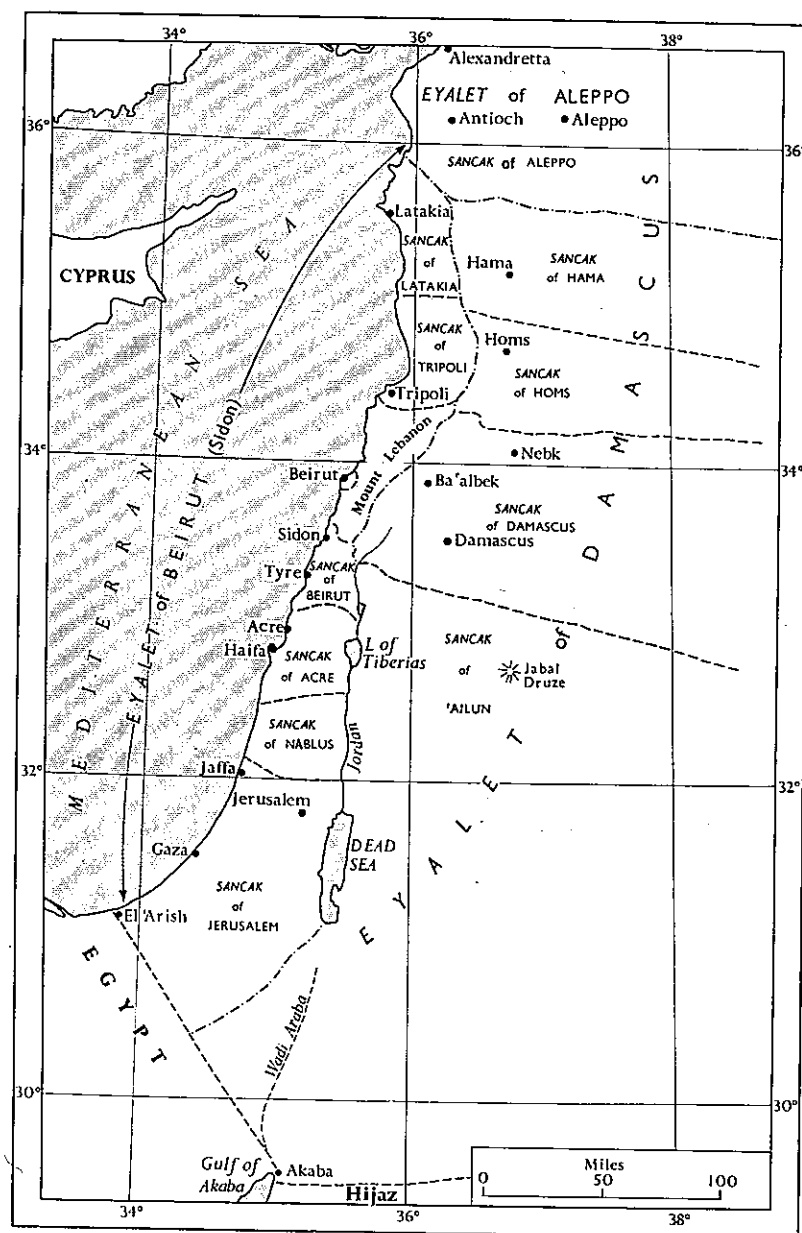
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OXFORD
AT THE CLARENDON PRESS

1968

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PART I

Introduction: The Background to the Tanzimat in Syria and Palestine

I

THE PRE-TANZIMAT PERIOD AND THE ERA OF MAHMUD II

A. Early reforms

THE first attempts to introduce reforms into the Ottoman Empire were made at the beginning of the eighteenth century and were mainly concerned with the army. The need for such reform was felt as a result of the successive and decisive defeats suffered by the Turkish army at the hands of its European rivals since the Ottoman retreat from Vienna in 1683. With the bitter realization of Western military superiority, the Turks began to adopt European weapons, training, and techniques; and from time to time during the eighteenth century army instructors were imported from the West, technical schools established, and Turkish soldiers trained in the methods of European warfare.¹ However, these changes, although sporadic and superficial, encountered considerable opposition in Turkey almost from the beginning. The opposition was led by the Janissary corps, the professional Ottoman army, because the new military measures were likely to undermine their special position in the state.² The Janissaries

¹ For a detailed account of those early military reforms see Bernard Lewis, *The Emergence of Modern Turkey* (London, 1961), pp. 45-50; Şerif Mardin, *The Genesis of Young Ottoman Thought* (Princeton, 1962), pp. 136-7, 143-4; Roderic H. Davison, *Reform in the Ottoman Empire 1856-1876* (Princeton, 1963), pp. 21-22.

² Mardin, pp. 138-9. See also M. A. Ubicini, *Letters on Turkey* (London, 1856), i. 7.

played, in fact, a predominant role in neutralizing the various reformist programmes of the eighteenth century, particularly the serious and comprehensive military reforms of Selim III at the end of that century.

Sultan Selim III (1789-1807), who was deeply influenced by France, was the first Ottoman monarch to introduce large-scale changes in the army. In 1792 and 1793 he promulgated a whole series of new instructions and regulations, known as the *Nizam-i Cedid*, which provided mainly for the raising of new troops, who were organized, trained, and equipped with French help.¹ The Janissaries, however, did not delay their resistance: encouraged by popular dissatisfaction and actively helped and guided by the leading 'Ulema of Istanbul,² they revolted in 1805 and induced the Sultan to abolish the *Nizam-i Cedid*. At the request of the Janissaries, Selim was deposed in May 1807, by virtue of a fetwa from the Chief Mufti, and the new army was at once dissolved.³ A year later, during the reign of Sultan Mustafa IV, the Janissary corps was also able to crush a counter-revolution headed by Bayraktar Mustafa, an Ottoman high official, who desired to revive Selim's reforms.

B. Mahmud II: the turning-point

The failure of both Selim and Mustafa led the next Sultan, Mahmud II (1808-39), to avoid the fatal mistake of his predecessors; it convinced him that the old order, especially the Janissary army, must be abolished before a new order could be established. Not until 1826 did Mahmud succeed in crushing the Janissaries, who for the last time tried to resist the re-creation of a new army. This event, known as *Vak'a-i Hayriye* ('The Auspicious Incident'), was a turning point in Ottoman reform. In the first place, the opposition to change in Turkey was at last deprived of its chief instrument of resistance. It is true that there still remained another powerful conservative body, the 'Ulema, whom Mahmud, being aware of their spiritual influence, was careful not to antagonize

¹ Lewis, op. cit., pp. 58-59. On Selim's reforms see also F. E. Bailey, *British Policy and the Turkish Reform Movement* (Cambridge, Mass., 1942), pp. 26-29.

² U. Heyd, 'The Ottoman 'Ulema and Westernization in the Time of Selim III and Mahmud II', in U. Heyd (ed.), *Studies in Islamic History and Civilization* (Jerusalem, 1961), p. 69.

³ Lewis, op. cit., pp. 70-71.

directly.¹ None the less, by a series of administrative measures, he was able to deprive them of their financial and administrative autonomy, and thus to weaken, to a great extent, their political power.²

In the second place, unlike the early phase of reform which was concerned mainly with the army, the new phase consisted also of a programme of change in almost every field of life, particularly in the system of government and administration of the provinces, and also in areas such as education, clothing, taxation, and, to some extent, the state of the non-Muslim subjects.³ Mahmud's first goals were to restore the authority of the central government in the virtually autonomous provinces of the Empire, and to re-establish his hegemony over the machinery of administration. To accomplish these ends, as well as to defend the Empire against its external enemies, the primary requirement was a strong and modern army. Thus the Sultan set up a new force, known as *Asakir-i Mansure-i Muhammediye* (The Victorious Muhammadan Soldiers). For the training and instructing of these troops, Prussian and British instructors were imported and a whole set of military and non-military schools were established.⁴

Another instrument which was needed, to carry out the policy of centralization and to transform the Empire into a modern state, was an efficient and reliable civil service. The Sultan therefore tried to improve the conditions and status of government employees by granting them regular salaries and by abolishing certain institutions and usages, which formerly had made their lives and property insecure.⁵ And although the efforts to raise the standards of the civil officials and to make them both proficient and honest were not entirely successful,⁶ Mahmud managed to establish, nevertheless, a modern government administration along Western lines.⁷ Similarly, the newly created army, in spite of its serious defects, succeeded in curbing the rebellious provincial Pashas and in eliminating the powerful feudal chiefs in most parts of the

¹ Heyd, *The 'Ulema*, p. 77.

² Lewis, op. cit., pp. 91-92, 95-96.

³ Bailey, p. 150; Davison, *Reform*, p. 31; Ed. Engelhardt, *La Turquie et la Tanzimat* (Paris, 1882-4), i. 33; Lewis, op. cit., pp. 82-85, 98-101; Ubicini, ii. 110-11.

⁴ Details in Lewis, op. cit., pp. 82-83.

⁵ Ibid., p. 88; Mardin, pp. 150-1; H. Temperley, *England and the Near East, the Crimea* (London, 1936), p. 31.

⁶ Davison, op. cit., p. 34; Temperley, pp. 27-28; Ubicini, ii. 439.

⁷ Lewis, op. cit., pp. 88-97; Mardin, pp. 147-8, 150-4.

Empire,¹ though not in Syria and Palestine. In these areas Mahmud's reforms were hardly felt, and the new Turkish army was neither able completely to control the local rulers up to 1831, nor to overcome the Egyptian army which occupied these provinces from 1831 to 1840.

C. Syria and Palestine up to 1831

Almost from the beginning of its rule in Syria and Palestine in the sixteenth century, the scope of Turkish government in these lands was limited essentially to matters concerned with the preservation of Ottoman supremacy, the collection of revenue, the performance of the Hajj to Mecca, and the maintenance of the *status quo*.² All other matters, particularly in the social and economic spheres, were left to the subjects to deal with, through their own autonomous institutions. The government aims themselves were usually achieved by a loose control and by keeping a balance of power among the various forces in the provinces. Regarding governors who grew too strong or manifested their disobedience, the *Porte* made efforts to play off other Pashas against them in order to cause their downfall.³ If unsuccessful, the *Porte* acted in accordance with the old Turkish proverb *Kesemediğin eli öp* (the hand you cannot cut off—kiss). It flattered and honoured those whom it could not ruin, and waited for a favourable opportunity to regain its authority.⁴

The decay of the central government since the seventeenth century weakened its control over the Syrian provinces and gave rise to strong local rulers, either Ottoman governors or native leaders, who were able to establish themselves more firmly than ever before. Thus local dynasts, like the 'Azms, Dāhir al-'Umar, and Ahmad al-Jazzār, established themselves in the course of the eighteenth century as autonomous rulers in various parts of Syria

¹ See Davison, *Reform*, pp. 26–27; Bailey, pp. 36–37.

² H. A. R. Gibb and H. Bowen, *Islamic Society and the West*, vol. i; *Islamic Society in the Eighteenth Century* (London, 1950), i. 200; U. Heyd, *Ottoman Documents on Palestine 1552–1615* (Oxford, 1960), p. 43. See also J. L. Burckhardt, *Travels in Syria and Holy Land* (London, 1822), p. 648; J. L. Porter, *Five Years in Damascus* (London, 1855), i. 132.

³ Examples in Ibrāhīm al-'Awra, *Ta'rikh wilāyat Sulaymān Bāshā al-'ādil* (Sidon, 1936), pp. 225–6; Yūsuf al-Dibs, *Ta'rikh Sūriyya* (Beirut, 1893–1905), viii. 629, 636, 639; Porter, op. cit. i. 133.

⁴ Gibb and Bowen, i. 231–2; Burckhardt, pp. 169, 648.

and Palestine.¹ They were able to maintain their provinces in tolerable order, to keep the Bedouin tribes off the centres of the inhabited areas, and thus to attract communal loyalties in a population that had lost faith in the power of the central government.² At the same time, however, large parts of the countryside were subjected to violent tribes, who caused destruction in agriculture and commerce, and were sometimes able to levy duties upon a number of small towns.³ In the mountains autonomous life had continued to develop, particularly in Houran and Mount Lebanon.⁴

This state of affairs continued in Syria and Palestine in the first part of the nineteenth century under the great reformer Sultan Mahmud II. While many provinces in Rumelia and Anatolia (and later in Iraq and Kurdistan too) were brought under the control of the central government,⁵ most Syrian districts were ruled by rebellious or autonomous governors, and by virtually independent Bedouin chieftains and mountain chiefs. For instance, 'Abdullāh Paşa, the *vali* of Sidon (1818–31), followed the path of al-Jazzār and openly disobeyed the Ottoman government, as the historian-monographer al-Baytār describes it: '... *tajāwaza fi'l-ahkām al-hudūd wa-ashhara al-'iṣyān 'alā al-dawla dhāt al-shawka wa'l-sawla, āmilan bi'l-istiqlāl*' [he exceeded the (divinely, ordained) limits in his judgements and manifested disobedience against the government, the possession of powers and authority, hoping to become independent].⁶ The *Porte*, it is true, ordered

¹ Gibb and Bowen, i. 219 ff., 232–4. For a study on Dāhir al-'Umar, see U. Heyd, *Dāhir al-'Umar shalliḥ ha-Galil ba-me'ah ha-yod-het* (Jerusalem, 1942). On the 'Azms, see S. Shamir, *The 'Azm wālīs of Syria, 1724–1785* (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Princeton, 1960); see also L. H. Bodman, *Political Factions in Aleppo, 1760–1826* (University of North Carolina, 1963), p. 5.

² Cf. A. H. Hourani, 'The Changing Face of the Fertile Crescent in the Eighteenth Century', in *A Vision of History* (Beirut, 1961), pp. 40–41.

³ Gibb and Bowen, i. 233–4; Bodman, p. 5.

⁴ Shamir, op. cit., pp. 245–7; W. R. Polk, *The Opening of South Lebanon 1788–1840* (Cambridge, Mass., 1963), pp. 10 ff.

⁵ Davison, op. cit., p. 26; S. H. Longrigg, *Four Centuries of Modern Iraq* (Oxford, 1925), pp. 282–8.

⁶ 'Abd al-Razzāq al-Baytār, *Ḥilyat al-bashar fi ta'rikh al-qarn al-thālith 'ashar* (Damascus, 1961–3), ii. 949. Cf. the following undated firman (presumably from the mid-nineteenth century) which starts: 'In the past, certain *valīs* of Sidon assumed the permission to themselves to commit deeds against the Supreme will. . . . ' Sofia, Bulgarian Archives, N.B. V.K./OR, No. 285/10.

For similar comments on the relations between 'Abdullāh and the Sultan, see Asad Rustum, *Bashir bayna al-Sultān wa'l-'azīz* (Beirut, 1950), p. 36; E. B. Barker, *Syria and Egypt Under the Last five Sultans of Turkey* (London, 1876), ii. 23.

'Abdullāh's dismissal after he tried to extend his rule over the *paşalık* of Damascus;¹ the *valis* of Damascus and Aleppo were sent to enforce the order upon him, but, unable to overcome his stronghold in Acre, the Ottomans eventually pardoned 'Abdullāh and recognized him as the *vali* of Sidon.²

Similarly, the government of Mahmud II was also unable to exercise its control over the mountainous areas of Syria and Palestine which were ruled by semi-independent local chiefs. Apart from Mount Lebanon,³ there existed four such major areas—two in Syria and two in Palestine. Those in Syria were held by two heterodox Islamic minority groups, the Druzes and the 'Alawis (or Nusayris). The former established their autonomous life in Mount Houran, or Jabal Druze,⁴ while the latter concentrated in Jabal Ansariyya, or the mountains of Latakia.⁵ The autonomous hilly areas in Palestine were inhabited by Sunni Muslims. They were: Jabal Nablus, which was ruled by powerful families, virtually independent of the Turkish Pashas,⁶ and the mountains around Jerusalem where a number of local chiefs were able to acquire a certain degree of autonomy.⁷

Even in the cities and towns where Ottoman officials and troops resided the real power did not always lie with the *Porte's* representatives. A fierce struggle for power took place in a number of

¹ In 1831, 'Abdullāh in fact succeeded in cutting the districts of Nablus and Jerusalem from the *paşalık* of Damascus. S. N. Spyridon (ed.), *Annals of Palestine 1821-1841* (Jerusalem, 1938), p. 55. Ihsān al-Nimr, *Ta'rikh Jabal Nablus wa'l-Balqa'* (Damascus, 1938), p. 239.

² Al-Dibs, viii. 637-41; As'ad Manşūr, *Ta'rikh al-Nāşira* (Egypt, 1924), p. 60. It seems that 'Abdullāh did not content himself with his title as *vali* of Sidon. In an order he sent to the authorities of Tiberias and Nazareth he signed his name as follows: 'Abdullāh wālī Şaydā wā-Miṣr wa'l-'Arish wa-Ghazza . . ., *ibid.*, p. 296; also 'Arif al-'Arif, *Ta'rikh Ghazza* (Jerusalem, 1943), p. 185.

³ On the position of the autonomous prince of Lebanon, Amir Bashīr Shihāb II (1788-1840), see Tannūs al-Shidyāq, *Akhbār al-a'yān fī Jabal Lubnān* (Beirut, 1859), pp. 358-9, 371, 382; Burckhardt, pp. 10-11, 194; al-Dibs, viii. 628, 638-9; see also Antūn Ḍāhir al-'Aqīqī, p. 9, *Thawra wa-fitna fī Lubnān* (Beirut, 1938), p. 53. For a study on the politics of Mount Lebanon, see Polk, pp. 10 ff.

⁴ See, for example, Burckhardt, pp. 291, 305, 308; K. Baedeker, *Palestine and Syria, Handbook for travellers* (Leipzig, 1876), p. 412.

⁵ See F. Walpole, *The Ansayrii and the Assassins* (London, 1851), iii. 353; Burckhardt, p. 141.

⁶ See Qusṭanṭīn al-Bāshā (ed.), *Mudhakkirāt ta'rikhiyya* (Lebanon, n.d.), p. 100; al-Nimr, pp. 161, 171-5, 184, 219, 235-6, 243-5; E. T. Rogers, *Notices of the Modern Samaritans* (London, 1855), p. 17.

⁷ See, for example, Spyridon, pp. 30-39; Baedeker, p. 139.

towns between various forces of which the Turkish Pasha was only one.¹ In Aleppo, for example, the real power lay with the Janissaries and the *eşraf* (the lineal descendants of the Prophet; in Arab. *ashrāf*) who fought each other for authority. From time to time the Ottoman *vali*, allying himself with one or other faction, was able to rule the city for a short period, but before long the rival groups would manage to unite and to overcome the authority of the Pasha and even to expel him from the city.² In 1813, for instance, a certain Jalāl al-Dīn Paşa was able to restore the *Porte's* authority in Aleppo; in 1814 the Aleppines revolted against his successor, Muḥammad Paşa, and deprived him of his power.³ After years of tension, popular rebellion, inspired by the local notables, broke out again in 1819 as a result of heavy taxation, and was only suppressed after the arrival of reinforcements.⁴ A similar revolt, based on the same motives and probably led by the Janissaries, occurred in Damascus in 1831; as a result the *vali* was killed, the army expelled, and government buildings burnt down.⁵ In Tripoli too a constant struggle existed between the Janissaries and the *eşraf*, frequently ending in the expulsion of the governor.⁶ In Jerusalem in 1808-9 and again in 1825 local forces succeeded in expelling the Turkish authorities,⁷ and similar incidents occurred in certain other places on the northern border of Syria, as well as in Gaza near the Egyptian border.⁸

These popular uprisings against the Turkish authorities did not, however, indicate a challenge to the ultimate authority of the Sultan and the Empire. The widespread discontent in the Syrian towns, normally fomented and guided by local notables, was

¹ See Gibb and Bowen, i. 218-21; Shamir, *The 'Azm*, pp. 220 ff.; Bodman, pp. 103 ff.; Şalāh al-Dīn al-Munajjid, *Wulāt Dimashq fī al-'ahd al-'Uthmānī* (Damascus, 1949), p. 70.

² Examples in Burckhardt, pp. 649-55. The author indicates that the Turkish *valis* usually 'occupied the Serai more like state prisoners than governors', p. 653. See also Bodman, pp. 66-67, 112, 122-3. On the background of the *eşraf* of Aleppo, see Bodman, pp. 79-102.

³ Barker, i. 78-80, 138-9.

⁴ *Ibid.* i. 302; [Anon.], *Rambles in the Desert of Syria* (London, 1864), p. 45; Yūsuf Qarā'li (ed.), *Ahamm ḥawādith Ḥalab* (Egypt, n.d.), pp. 37-43, 45-58.

⁵ Al-Bāshā, pp. 33-34; Jamil al-Shāṭṭī, *Rawḍ al-bashar fī a'yān Dimashq fī al-qarn al-thālith 'ashar* (Damascus, 1946), pp. 119-20.

⁶ Burckhardt, pp. 169-70; A. Y. Kayat, *A Voice from Lebanon* (London, 1847), p. 69; Bodman, pp. 66-67.

⁷ Al-'Awra, p. 88; Spyridon, pp. 32-38.

⁸ Burckhardt, pp. 124-5, 132, 138; al-'Arif, p. 185; see also al-Nimr, p. 21.

usually directed against the extortion and oppression of the individual Turkish governors.¹ These Pashas, who possessed extensive powers within their provinces,² would often use their authority to tyrannize and bereave the population. For one thing, they would frequently execute many people, among them innocent persons, without a trial, in order to prevent an alleged insurrection or to render the populace submissive.³ Secondly, and more often, the *vali* would extort large sums of money from the population either through the *mültezims* (tax-farmers) or by imposing unjust taxes (*avaniyas*).⁴ The Pashas were not only unsalaried by the government, but they were themselves quite uncertain of their future prospect—they might be recalled and executed or their property confiscated—and they therefore were apt to 'treat their provinces as mere transient possessions and take care to make no improvement for the benefit of their successors; on the contrary, they hasten to exhaust them of the produce, and to reap in one day, if possible, the fruit of many years'.⁵

The inevitable consequence of this state of affairs was the impoverishment and depopulation of both the towns and the countryside.⁶ Even the few just governors, such as the 'Azm Pashas in Syria in the eighteenth century,⁷ and Sulaymān Paşa in Palestine at the beginning of the nineteenth century, were unable to stop this process of destruction.

But apart from the oppressive Pashas, the local inhabitants themselves contributed in no small measure to their misfortunes, by their own rivalries and feuds. In the towns serious contests took place, as we have already seen, between various local factions. In the countryside frequent hostilities occurred between rival villages and clans: in Jabal Ansariyya, for example, Nusayri clans

¹ Al-Bāshā, pp. 2-4; Barker, i. 302-3; Qarā'li, *Ḥalab*, p. 40; cf. Gibb and Bowen, i. 232.

² Al-'Awra, p. 263; Bailey, p. 13; Bodman, pp. 20-21, 27-28; Engelhardt, ii. 106; Shamir, *The 'Azm*, p. 226; Temperley, p. 236.

³ Bodman, pp. 21, 112.

⁴ Al-'Awra, pp. 16, 57; [Anon.], *Ḥasr al-lithām 'an nakabāt al-Shām* (Egypt, 1890), pp. 27-28; Bodman, pp. 40, 112; Burckhardt, pp. 6, 10-11, 13, 169, 194, 299-300; Gibb and Bowen, i. 269-70; Muhammad Salīm al-Jundī, *Ta'rikh Ma'arrat al-Nu'mān* (Damascus, 1923), i. 197-8; al-Munajjid, pp. 4-5.

⁵ C. F. Volney, *Travels to Syria and Egypt* (London, 1787), ii. 380.

⁶ Al-'Awra, p. 57; Burckhardt, pp. 5, 10-11, 31, 147, 341 n.

⁷ Bodman, pp. 103-4; Hourani, *The Fertile Crescent*, p. 40; Shamir, op. cit., pp. 254-5.

fought each other or were engaged in warfare with other sects in the neighbourhood.¹ In a number of areas in Palestine (as well as in Lebanon) the population was divided into the ancient factions of Qays and Yaman, and families and villages of the rival parties were engaged in a 'perpetual civil war' in the districts of Nablus, Jerusalem, and Hebron, involving on each side corresponding factions of Bedouin.²

The latter indeed not only took part in the bloody peasant warfare, but in fact were themselves the chief cause of the destruction of the countryside and the subsequent ruin of agriculture and commerce. These powerful nomads infested the Syrian provinces, pillaged caravans and travellers along the roads, ravaged large pieces of cultivated land, and even dared to raid villages that were situated on the outskirts of big towns. In some places the Bedouin spared villages and 'protected' the peasants if they paid a regular protection-fee.³ Even Turkish *valis* in Damascus paid an annual tribute (*sürre*) to certain Bedouin tribes, which controlled the pilgrims' route, for the passage of the Ḥajj caravans to Mecca.⁴ This tribute which in practice, however, did not always safeguard the caravans⁵ was, perhaps, characteristic of the Ottoman policy towards this most turbulent element; it was, on the whole, conciliatory and infirm, and thus could not deter the Bedouin from laying waste the countryside.⁶

Moreover, the Turkish régime not only failed to maintain order and security in the country; it was also responsible for the widespread failure to protect and develop the Syrian economy. Utilities

¹ See, for example, Burckhardt, pp. 141, 152-3.

² J. Finn, *Stirring Times* (London, 1878), i. 226 ff.; R. A. S. Macalister and E. W. G. Masterman, 'Occasional Papers on the modern inhabitants of Palestine', *Palestine Exploration Fund*, 1905, pp. 343-56, 1906, pp. 33-50, 114 ff.; al-Nimr, pp. 130-4; Volney, ii. 323-6. On the Qays-Yaman rivalry in the Lebanon, see al-'Aqīqī, p. 23; al-Shidyāq, pp. 136-7.

³ Burckhardt, pp. 213, 264-5, 299, 301 ff., 343, 352 ff., 403, 433, 655; al-Nimr, p. 21.

⁴ Burckhardt, pp. 242, 660; Volney, ii. 251, 273.

⁵ Burckhardt, pp. 244-5; al-Munajjid, pp. 7, 52, 57, 60. Note, for instance, the famous attack on the 1757 caravan.

⁶ Burckhardt, pp. 56-57, 264-5, 364; al-Munajjid, pp. 53-54. Note, for example, Ibrāhīm Paşa's remark in a letter he sent to his father, after he had occupied Palestine and Syria: '*amahu lam yabqa sukkān fī qurā al-Shām min jawr al-'arab wa-zulm al-wuzarā' al-sābiqin*' ('there remained no inhabitants in the villages of Syria because of the Bedouin usurpation and the oppression of the former vezirs'). See Asad Rustum, *al-Mahfūzāt al-malikiyya al-Misriyya* (Beirut, 1840-2), iii. 165, No. 4766.

and public works were neglected, heavy taxation and confiscations took place, and sudden devaluations of the Ottoman currency occasionally occurred.¹ Nor was this all. Legal redress hardly existed because of the venality and corruption in the courts, and because the execution of the court decrees depended upon the good will of the very administration against which they were directed.²

The victims of this harmful system were all the Ottoman subjects in Syria and Palestine, Muslim and non-Muslim alike. But the latter suffered a great deal more since they were in addition regarded as second-class citizens both by the government and by the Muslim public. By law they had to wear distinctive dress, and to pay a poll-tax (*cizye*), and their evidence was invalid in the courts. Christians and Jews were denied permits to build or repair places of worship and were prohibited from performing ceremonies such as the ringing of church bells and the carrying of crosses in public. In addition they were not allowed to ride horses in the towns, nor to walk in certain places within them, and were also exposed to many other indignities.³ In many places throughout Syria and Palestine non-Muslims were often subjected to oppression, extortion, and violence by both the local authorities and the Muslim population.⁴

It is true that a number of attempts were made by Sultan Mahmud II to reform some of the above abuses, and particularly to subdue the local forces in both the cities and the mountains to Ottoman direct rule. But these attempts were foiled by the powerful local opposition to change.⁵ Yet apart from this opposition, there were other factors which prevented Mahmud II from establishing centralized rule and introducing reforms in Syria and

¹ Burckhardt, p. 21; Gibb and Bowen, i. 208, 270-1, ii. 57-58; Kayat, p. 59; Lewis, *Emergence*, pp. 29, 108-9.

² Gibb and Bowen, i. 208; *Hasr al-lithām*, p. 31; Shamir, *The 'Azm*, pp. 241-2. Cf. Ubicini, i. 183-4.

³ Al-'Awra, p. 197; Barker, i. 306; Bodman, pp. 45, 98; Burckhardt, p. 308; Gibb and Bowen, ii. 208, 251; *Hasr al-lithām*, pp. 36-39, 43-44; Kayat, pp. 52-53; A. Ya'ari (ed.), 'Massa' David de-beyt Hillel (1824)', in *Massa'ot Eretz-Israel* (Tel Aviv, 1946), p. 619. Cf. R. H. Davison, 'Turkish Attitudes concerning Christian-Muslim Equality in the Nineteenth Century', *American Historical Review*, lix. 844-5.

⁴ Examples in al-'Awra, pp. 90, 109; Burckhardt, pp. 160, 180, 315; *Hasr al-lithām*, pp. 40, 42. For a detailed survey on the state of the non-Muslim subjects, see below, Chap. XIV.

⁵ Al-Bāshā, p. 100; Bodman, pp. 128 ff.; al-Nimr, pp. 219, 235-6; Rogers, p. 17.

Palestine. It was not until 1826 that the Sultan raised the new army which enabled him to restore his authority in a number of semi-independent provinces; and between 1826 and 1831 Mahmud could not possibly have spared the large military force necessary for action in Syria.¹ The long Greek war was a great drain on Turkish military resources and the battle of Navarino in 1827 saw the virtual destruction of the Ottoman fleet. Even more crippling was the Russian-Turkish war of 1828-9, during which the Sultan was again forced to seek military help from Muḥammad 'Alī of Egypt.² Hardly did the Turkish army recover from this war when it was employed to quell another rebellion in the Balkans and to restore Ottoman rule in Baghdad.³ And when in 1831 it seemed as if the Syrian provinces might have been the next target for Mahmud's reformist policy, there came the vigorous Egyptian invasion which made such a campaign impossible. Thus Syria and Palestine became completely isolated from Ottoman rule and reform up to 1840.

¹ See Sulaymān Abū 'Izz al-Dīn, *Ibrāhīm Bāshā fī Sūriyya* (Beirut, 1929), p. 34.

² Rustum, *Mahfūzāt*, i. 109, Nos. 264 and 265; p. 110, No. 270.

³ Ibid., pp. 122-3, Nos. 312 and 317; 'Abd al-Rahmān al-Rāfi', *Aṣr Muḥammad 'Alī* (Cairo, 1918), p. 191; Longrigg, pp. 263 ff.

II

REFORM IN SYRIA AND PALESTINE UNDER IBRĀHĪM PAŞA

IT was, in fact, under Egyptian rule that for the first time reforms were introduced into Syria and Palestine. The Egyptian occupation, which lasted from 1831 to 1840,¹ put an end to a long period of confusion and backwardness, and opened a new era in Syrian history. Bold measures which were carried out by Ibrāhīm Paşa brought about a profound change in almost every aspect of the old life, and in certain respects paved the way for the later Ottoman reforms of the *Tanzimat*.

A. Government and administration

After a short transitional period during which local rule remained temporarily in the hands of the old order,² the first administrative measures were adopted: the former division of the country into *paşaliks* was abolished and Syria and Palestine were put under a *hükümdar* (a civil Governor-General), the Egyptian Sharīf Paşa, who resided in Damascus and was represented in each district town by a *mütesellim* (civil governor), usually a local Arab.³ Ibrāhīm Paşa, whose official title was that of *serasker* (C.-in-C. of the army), had in fact a ruling hand in both military and civil affairs of the country.⁴ For indeed, the Egyptian army, which in terms of those days was enormous in relation to the size of the

¹ For the motives, factors, and pretexts which led to the invasion, see: Rustum, *Mahfuzāt*, i. 123-4, No. 317; p. 145, No. 385; p. 163, No. 425; p. 164, No. 429; ii. 48, No. 1388; p. 52, No. 1415; p. 102, No. 1763; p. 149, No. 2078; p. 211, No. 2430; al-Rāfi'i, pp. 188-92; 'Abd al-Rahmān Zakī, *al-Ta'rikh al-harbi li-'aṣr Muḥammad 'Alī* (Egypt, 1950), pp. 377, 379, 381; Abū 'Izz al-Dīn, pp. 33-34.

² Rustum, op. cit. i. 128-9, No. 342; p. 283, No. 820; Polk, p. 112.

³ See, for example, al-Bāshā, pp. 69, 99, 176; Kayat, p. 264; Rustum, op. cit. i. 278, No. 280. For a detailed study on the Egyptian administration in Syria see Itzhak Hofman, *Muḥammad 'Alī in Syria* (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Jerusalem, 1963), pp. 34 ff.

⁴ See, for example, Rustum, op. cit. iii. 417-18, No. 5496. This situation was a source of friction between Ibrāhīm and Sharīf; see ibid. 68, No. 4350; iv. 205-6, No. 6000.

Reform in Syria and Palestine under Ibrāhīm Paşa 13

population,¹ played a predominant role in the new Syrian administration. Only with the help of this military force was the new régime able to shift the old balance of power in favour of the

Estimations of the Egyptian military forces in Syria and Palestine between 1831 and 1840*

Period	Numbers
1831-2	25,000-30,000†
1833-4	A. 30,000‡ B. 50,000§ C. 85,000
1836	A. 40,000 B. 45,000 C. 60,000**
1839-40	A. 60,000‡‡ B. 70,000-80,000‡‡ C. 85,000§§ D. 90,000

* Some of the figures included also irregular troops which apparently were as efficient as the regular army; F.O. 78/580, Werry to Aberdeen, No. 12, Aleppo, 31 Dec. 1841. Note that the total number of the Egyptian military force in 1833 was some 100,000 troops, see below, n. §.

† Al-Rāfi'i, p. 193; Zakī, p. 39.

‡ F.O. 78/243, Farren to Palmerston, No. 38, Damascus, 3 Oct. (should be Nov.) 1834.

§ G. Douin, *La Mission du Baron de Boislecomte...* (Cairo, n.d.), p. 113.

|| Al-Rāfi'i, pp. 415-18.

** Respective estimations by Consuls Farren, Moore, and Campbell, in F.O. 78/283, Campbell's report, No. 3, 31 July 1836.

‡‡ A letter from Damascus of 27 Feb. 1841, in Wood's Papers, St. Antony's College, Oxford.

§§ C. Napier, *The War in Syria* (London, 1842), i. xxxiv, ii. 283.

|||| A. Jochmus, *The Syrian War and the Decline of the Ottoman Empire* (Berlin, 1883), pp. 5-6.

|||| Polk, p. 169.

government and to carry out reforms which altered the social structure of the country.

But it was not without a powerful local resistance that these changes were implemented. Thus, for example, in the Ansariyya

¹ Walpole, i. 41; also al-Bāshā, pp. 58, 61. For figures on the Egyptian army in Syria see Table above.

mountains the Egyptians established control only after quelling two successive uprisings.¹ Similarly in Palestine a peasants' revolt, under the leadership of Nablus notables, as a reaction to conscription, broke out in 1834 and was bloodily suppressed.² At the same time, however, Ibrāhīm failed to break the power of the warlike Druzes; in 1837 the Houran Druzes revolted and defeated several Egyptian military expeditions which were sent against their stronghold of Leja.³

Another difficult barrier to overcome was the powerful Bedouin tribes which showed resistance to the new régime right from the beginning.⁴ And although the Egyptians succeeded in curbing most of the local nomad tribes and even managed to disarm and collect taxes from certain clans,⁵ they were, nevertheless, unable to keep in permanent check the Bedouin east of Jordan and the Negeb, who from time to time disturbed peace and order.⁶

B. Destruction of urban leadership; social and economic reforms

In the towns the Egyptian régime effected a radical change by undermining the position of the local leadership and by establishing its officials as the sole authority. Regular conscription and disarmament served to drain the military strength of local big families and urban organizations,⁷ while the secularization of the judicial system deprived the 'Ulema of their influential position. The Muslim court (*mahkeme*), now under strict inspection, was allowed to deal only with matters of personal status, property holdings, and the like, while criminal cases were turned over to the

¹ Walpole, iii. 353; al-Dibs, viii. 650; 'Abdullāh Ḥabīb Nawfal', 'Makhtūṭat Nawfal Nawfal al-Ṭarābulṣī', *al-Kullīyya*, xi. 170.

² For details on the peasants' revolt in central Palestine, see Spyridon, pp. 74-76; Abū 'Izz al-Dīn, pp. 171-2; Rustum, *Mahfūzāt*, ii. 399, No. 3438.

³ Al-Dibs, pp. 650-1; Mikhā'il Mishāqa, *Muntakhabāt min al-jawāb 'alā iqtirāḥ al-aḥbāb* (Beirut, 1955), pp. 123-8; Nawfal, op. cit., p. 182; al-Bāshā, pp. 120-41, 167-8.

⁴ See Rustum, *Mahfūzāt*, i. 300, No. 923; p. 302, No. 931; p. 303, No. 941; p. 309, No. 980; Abū 'Izz al-Dīn, pp. 169-73; Manṣūr, pp. 72-73.

⁵ Rustum, op. cit. i. 295, No. 890; p. 302, No. 931; p. 303, No. 941; ii. 96, No. 1726; p. 116, No. 1864; iv. 222-3, No. 6028; p. 255, No. 6088; *P.E.F.* (1906), pp. 39, 133.

⁶ Abū 'Izz al-Dīn, p. 189; Rustum, op. cit. i. 238, No. 671; ii. 104, No. 1778; *F.O.* 78/243, Farren to Palmerston, No. 10, Damascus, 6 June 1834.

⁷ Cf. al-Ārif, p. 214; al-Jundī, p. 197; Rustum, op. cit. ii. 347, No. 3433; *Rambles*, p. 45.

mütesellim, and administrative and commercial issues to the newly created local council (*meclis*).¹

In view of all this it is not surprising that the urban notables took an active part in the rebellions which broke out in many towns throughout Palestine and Syria, either in connexion with the peasants' revolt² or in other uprisings.³ All these insurrections were crushed with an iron hand by the Egyptians and their ring-leaders ('Ulema and other notables) executed or imprisoned.⁴

Strong antagonism to the Egyptian régime was felt not only by the former ruling class, which was the principal victim of the new order; it was also shared by the great majority of the Syrian population which seemingly might have possessed substantial motives for favouring the new government. Indeed, under the rule of Ibrāhīm Paşa, the Syrian population enjoyed for the first time considerable security of life and property, greater justice and opportunity for legal redress, and a more equitable system of taxation.⁵ The public security which was established in the countryside and along the roads made it possible for agriculture and commerce to flourish,⁶

¹ For details on the formation and the work of the *meclis* (*majlis* in Arab.) under the Egyptians, see: al-Bāshā, p. 56; Abū 'Izz al-Dīn, pp. 135-8; Hofman, pp. 57 ff.; Kayat, p. 264; Rustum, *Mahfūzāt*, ii. 358, No. 3204; idem, *Bashir*, p. 103. See also, *F.O.* 78/283, Report on Syria encl. in Campbell to Palmerston, No. 29, Alexandria, 23 Aug. 1836; H. Guys, *Esquisse de l'état politique et commercial de la Syrie* (Paris, 1862), p. 48; Mishāqa, *Muntakhabāt*, p. 120.

² The peasants' revolt in central Palestine was followed by rebellions in cities such as Jerusalem (Spyridon, pp. 78-80, 106-7); Hebron (al-Bāshā, pp. 100-1; Abū 'Izz al-Dīn, p. 172; al-Rāfi'i, p. 304); Safed (Rustum, *Mahfūzāt*, ii. 411, No. 3501; G. Kresel (ed.), *Qorot ha-'itim* [including a manuscript of Menahem Mendel of Kaminitz] (Jerusalem, 1950), pp. 36 ff.); Tiberias (*F.O.* 78/243, Farren to Palmerston, No. 13, Damascus, 25 June 1834); Tripoli and some neighbouring towns (Rustum, op. cit. ii. 432, No. 3596; pp. 365-6, No. 3163). Damascus was on the eve of rebellion; *F.O.* 78/283, Farren to Palmerston, No. 14, 26 June 1834. For a detailed study on the 1834 revolt see, M. Abir, *Ha-mered neged ha-shilton ha-Mitzri be-eretx Israel bi-shnat 1834 ve-rig 'o*, (unpublished M.A. thesis, The Hebrew University, Jerusalem, 1961).

³ On the revolt in Tripoli in 1833, see al-Dibs, viii. 650; Nawfal, *al-Kullīyya*, xi. 130. On Gaza, see al-Ārif, p. 214. On a plot by the 'Ulema of Jerusalem to revolt in 1832, see Rustum, op. cit. i. 189-90, No. 499. On a Druze plan in 1837 to collaborate with the people of Damascus in revolt against the Egyptians, see al-Bāshā, p. 26.

⁴ Ibid., see in particular al-Bāshā, pp. 86, 118, 127; Manṣūr, p. 72; Rustum, op. cit. ii. 489, No. 3868; *P.E.F.* (1906), p. 33; Spyridon, pp. 93, 97.

⁵ Barker, ii. 204; R. Edwards, *La Syrie 1840-1862* (Paris, 1862), p. 11.

⁶ See, for example, al-Bāshā, pp. 95-96; K. M. Bazili, *Syria i Palestina pod turetzkim pravitel'stvom* (St. Petersburg, 1875), i. 192; Nu'mān al-Qasāṭīlī, *Kitāb al-rawḍa al-ghamma fī Dimashq al-fayḥā* (Beirut, 1879), p. 90; E. Robinson, *Later Biblical researches in Palestine* (London, 1856), ii. 377-8.

and the authorities themselves did much to promote economic development. In the field of agriculture Egyptian experts introduced new methods and crops, marshes were drained, deserted lands were recultivated, and peasants were given tools, seeds, loans, and sometimes even tax reductions.¹ Similarly local trade was encouraged not only as a result of greater stability, but also because of the army's need for supplies.² In industry too some development took place as new factories (mainly for military purposes) were set up, natural resources exploited, and apprentices sent to Egypt to acquire new professions.³

But all these improvements were not valued by most of the people, not only because certain monopolies were imposed on some branches of agriculture and commerce,⁴ but also, and more important, because of the number of changes which the new régime tried to effect in the way of life of the Syrian population. The two main causes of popular unrest were firstly the general conscription of young Muslims, which led, as already noted, to a series of uprisings throughout the country,⁵ and secondly the levying of a personal tax, called *ferde*.⁶ The new tax was theoretically a progressive income-tax; it was levied on every male from the age of twelve, and ranged from 15 to 500 piastres according to wealth.⁷ In fact the *ferde* turned out to be a great burden on the population, probably because it was not collected in accordance with the original assessments.⁸ In addition there was the humiliation

¹ Rustum, *Mahfūzāt*, ii. 264, No. 2696; p. 287, No. 2811; p. 326, No. 3015.

² See al-Bāshā, p. 58; *Birjis Baris*, ii (1860), No. 29; al-Qasātili, p. 90; Rustum, *Bashur*, p. 101; F.O. 78/243, Farren to Palmerston, Damascus, 7 Feb. 1843.

³ Rustum, *Mahfūzāt*, iii. 123, No. 4581; p. 148, No. 4689; pp. 229–30, No. 4964; Barker, ii. 209; Guys, *Esquisse*, p. 170; J. L. Farley, *Two Years in Syria* (London, 1858), p. 26; cf. Polk, pp. 118–19, 168. See also Hofman, pp. 218 ff.

⁴ Rustum, op. cit. ii. 285, No. 2801; p. 296, No. 2853; p. 357, No. 3195; Polk, pp. 167–8, 170–1.

⁵ On the popular opposition to conscription, see al-Bāshā, p. 103; Barker, ii. 204–6; R. R. Madden, *The Turkish Empire* (London, 1862), ii. 48; Mishāqa, *Muntakhabāt*, p. 122; Bülus Qarā'li (ed.), *Futūḥāt Ibrāhīm Bāshā* (Ḥarīṣa, 1937), pp. 43–44; Rustum, op. cit. ii. 402, No. 3457.

⁶ Al-Bāshā, pp. 77, 107, 213; Philippe and Farid Khāzin, *al-Muḥarrarāt al-siyāsiyya* (Jūniya, 1910–11), i. 8–9, 86; Mishāqa, op. cit., p. 122.

⁷ Al-Bāshā, p. 90; al-'Aqīqī, pp. 26, 49; al-Jundi, p. 12; Madden, ii. 46.

⁸ Muḥammad 'Alī in a letter to Ibrāhīm stressed, for example, that the *ferde* which was levied in Syria was burdensome (*bāhiṣa*), and suggested that it be put on the same level as in Egypt. Rustum, op. cit. ii. 344, No. 3126. See also Mishāqa, op. cit., p. 121; F.O. 78/243, Farren to Palmerston, No. 8, Damascus, 29 May 1834.

caused to the Muslims, who regarded the tax as a poll-tax (*cizye*) only to be levied on Christians and Jews.¹ But even taxes other than the *ferde* which were neither new nor in excess of the former rates² aroused great opposition, since the Egyptian taxation system was on the whole more permanent, general, and systematic than that of the Turks; it was based on a direct collection by soldiers and left less room for evasion.³ Add to this the system of ill-paid forced labour of men and animals,⁴ and the great measure of cruelty and tyranny exercised by the Egyptian authorities,⁵ and the main motives for the Syrians' hostility to Ibrāhīm's régime clearly emerge.

C. *The state of the Christian subjects*

As if all these factors were not enough to incite vigorous opposition to the Egyptian rule, there were further aspects of the new order which filled the cup of Muslim resentment to overflowing. For one thing, Muslim religious feelings were severely aroused when Egyptian troops marched through the cities playing musical instruments like Europeans, or when Muslim places of worship were used as barracks.⁶ Another innovation, which deeply irritated the Muslims, was the setting up of European consulates for the first time in Damascus and Jerusalem,⁷ and the permitting of missionary activities in the country.⁸ But the main blow to Muslim feelings and pride was the equal status granted to the Christian subjects. Indeed under Egyptian rule Christians (and, to a lesser extent, Jews also) enjoyed full equality and complete security of life, property, and honour.⁹ They were no longer subjected to oppression and extortion by Muslim notables, nor to

¹ Al-Bāshā, pp. 90–91; Mishāqa, *Muntakhabāt*, p. 181.

² See Rustum, *Mahfūzāt*, iii. 186–8, No. 4851.

³ Madden, ii. 47. Compare Polk, p. 159; Baedeker, p. 71; F.O. 78/455, Rose to Palmerston, No. 30, Beirut, 3 May 1841; Kayat, p. 264.

⁴ F.O. 78/243, Campbell's Report, 31 July 1836, answers to questions Nos. 17, 18; Abū 'Izz al-Dīn, pp. 159–60; Rustum, *Mahfūzāt*, ii. 364–5, No. 3245; Polk, pp. 142, 157–8, 168.

⁵ Al-Bāshā, pp. 86, 127, 184–5; al-Shāṭṭī, p. 12; Baedeker, p. 71; Barker, ii. 205–6; Bazili, i. 178.

⁶ Spyridon, p. 64; al-Bayṭār, i. 25; al-Shāṭṭī, p. 12; al-Bāshā, p. 87.

⁷ Ibid., p. 93; Porter, *Damascus*, i. 134; Rustum, op. cit. ii. 330, No. 3041.

⁸ A. Tibawi, *British Interests in Palestine, 1800–1901* (London, 1961), pp. 13, 16.

⁹ Mishāqa, *Muntakhabāt*, p. 139; *Ḥasr al-lithām*, p. 45; Kayat, p. 88; Rustum, *Bashūr*, p. 100; F.O. 78/283, Campbell's Report, op. cit., answers to questions, Nos. 15, 16.

assaults and attacks by Muslim mobs.¹ Non-Muslim communities were permitted to build and repair their places of worship without limit,² while their representatives took part in the work of the *meclis* alongside Muslim deputies.³ Moreover, the new rights of the Syrian Christians sometimes exceeded even those of the Muslims: they were, for example, exempted from conscription⁴ and became also relatively richer and more acceptable to the public administration.⁵

This profound change in their status filled the Syrian Christians with joy, self-confidence, and even insolence; and they were not slow to exercise, if not to flaunt, their new liberties and privileges in the face of the Muslims, for example, by carrying crosses in public processions. Such behaviour and the fact that Christian soldiers from Lebanon were employed to quell Nusayri and Druze uprisings and occasionally also marched through the streets of Damascus,⁶ all seriously affected Muslim sensitivities and prestige: 'the Mussulmans . . . deeply deplored the loss of that sort of superiority which they all and individually exercised over and against the other sects.'⁷ Muslims were likewise reported to have said to each other: '*yā akhī, al-dawla šarat dawlat Našāra, khalaṣat dawlat al-Islām*' ('O my brother, the state has become a Christians' state, the Islamic state has ended').⁸ This statement no doubt reflected the deep concern of the Muslim majority in Syria not merely about the loss of their supremacy over the Christians but also about the change in the character of their state. Hence their bitter resentment not only of the Christians but mainly of the Egyptian régime.⁹

¹ Abū 'Izz al-Dīn, p. 76; al-Bāshā, p. 84; Bazili, p. 138; Kayat, p. 88; Qarā'li, *Futūḥāt*, p. 15; Rustum, *Mahfūzāt*, ii. 117, No. 1871; Spyridon, p. 57.

² Finn, i. 135; Rustum, op. cit. ii. 325-6, No. 3011; p. 336, No. 3077; iii. 126, No. 4596; p. 215, No. 4926. ³ Rustum, *Bashir*, p. 103; al-Bāshā, p. 56.

⁴ Except for a few cases, when Christians were recruited as a punishment for taking part in the 1834 revolt; they were, however, released afterwards. Rustum, *Mahfūzāt*, ii. 481, No. 3824.

⁵ Al-Bāshā, pp. 79-80; *Ḥasr al-lithām*, p. 67; Polk, pp. 132, 135, 175; Walpole, i. 225.

⁶ See al-Bāshā, pp. 57, 67, 68, 80, 82-83, 87, 131; Nawfal, *al-Kulliyya*, xi. 130 ff., 170 ff.; Rustum, op. cit. iii. 339, No. 5312; compare A. Hourani, *Arabic Thought in the Liberal Age* (London, 1962), p. 60.

⁷ F.O. 78/283, Campbell's Report, p. 242, encl. in Campbell to Palmerston, No. 29, Alexandria, 23 Aug. 1836.

⁸ Al-Bāshā, p. 77. See also Nawfal, op. cit. xi. 273.

⁹ F.O. 78/495, Rose to Canning, No. 36, Beirut, 29 May 1842; Bazili, ii. 2-3;

To sum up, Egyptian rule, which at the beginning had been well received by certain elements of the leadership and the people,¹ became most unpopular within a few years. The entire Muslim population of Syria turned against Ibrāhīm, essentially because of his measures concerning centralization, conscription, taxation, and equality for non-Muslims, which affected all classes of this society. Ibrāhīm Paşa was indeed able to check the intense local opposition by ruling the Syrians with a rod of iron.² But when he withdrew in 1840, there took place throughout the country a total reaction against regular rule and order and against the Christians, which made it extremely difficult for the returning Ottomans to resume their authority and introduce reform. Yet the Egyptian rule in Syria and Palestine had certainly a long-term impact on the local society. It provided the Syrians with a new experience of security and of a regular system of government after a long period of chaos and oppression. It possibly also 'had sown the seeds of political equality in the mind of the Syrians'³ by giving the Muslims a taste of equality with the non-Muslims. In addition, under the Egyptians, Syria and Palestine were widely opened for the first time to European activity and influence, after a long period of traditional isolated life. In short, the major significance of the Egyptian rule lies in the opening of a new era in the history of Syria, and in preparing the ground for the coming reforms of the Tanzimat.

In this respect the reforms of Muḥammad 'Alī in Syria were more advanced than the reforms of Mahmud II in the other provinces of the Empire. The most important work of both reformers was the destruction of an old order and the creation of the beginning of a new one, which anticipated the future main lines of the

al-Bāshā, pp. 57, 59, 68, 77, 79-80, 83, 85, 104, 125, 131, 134; Qarā'li, *Futūḥāt*, p. 41. Manṣūr claims that one of the motives for the 1834 rebellion was the Muslim hatred of Christians; see pp. 71-72. According to Campbell, this motive 'had more deep roots than all other just motives of complaint'. See Campbell's Report, op. cit., p. 242.

¹ Rustum, *Mahfūzāt*, i. 123, No. 316; p. 164, No. 429; al-Bayṭār, pp. 26-27; F.O. 78/215, Farren to Palmerston, Beirut, 7 Aug. 1832; F.O. 78/243, Farren to Palmerston, Damascus, 29 May 1834; Spyridon, p. 64; Bazili, p. 178. Even the population of South Anatolia welcomed the Egyptian army. Rustum, op. cit. ii. 149, No. 2078; C. MacFarlane, *Turkey and its Destiny* (London, 1850), i. 302.

² Ibrāhīm, for example, was reported to have said: 'I am the only man to manage the Arabs. I could and did cut their heads, which the Turks never will do.' F.O. 78/431, No. 70, 21 Feb. 1841, in Temperley, p. 29.

³ Barker, ii. 315; see also Walpole, i. 225-6; Edwards, p. 8.

Tanzimat. But whereas the central problems of Islamic society—its legal basis and the place of the non-Muslim subjects within it—were not challenged at all by Mahmud II,¹ Muḥammad 'Alī dealt with them indirectly by means of administrative measures.² It was only under Sultan Abdülmecid that legal changes were introduced into the Ottoman Empire—including Syria and Palestine—together with other reforms in government and administration and in the welfare of the subjects.

¹ Lewis, *Emergence*, p. 101.

² Ibrāhīm, for instance, did not change the legal status of the Christians and Jews who continued to pay the *cizye* (poll-tax) under his rule. See Mishāqa, *Muntakhabāt*, p. 121; Polk, p. 135.

III

THE REFORMS OF THE TANZIMAT AND THE STRUGGLE FOR CHANGE WITHIN THE PORTE (1839-61)

A. *The era of the Hatt-ı Şerif*

THE first great reforming edict of the Tanzimat era, the *Hatt-ı Hümayun*, or *Hatt-ı Şerif*, of Gülhane¹ (the Imperial, or noble Rescript of the Rose chamber), was promulgated on 3 November 1839, a short time after Abdülmecid succeeded his father, Mahmud II, as Sultan of the Ottoman Empire. The decree was issued mainly as a result of a great endeavours and a sincere desire on the part of its architect, Mustafa Reşid Paşa, to preserve the Empire and to improve the conditions of its inhabitants.² The timing of the proclamation was calculated to gain the support of the European powers against the rebellious Pasha of Egypt, Muḥammad 'Alī, who threatened the integrity of the Empire.³

The reforms of the Gülhane decree can be divided roughly into three groups, a division which may also be applied to the reforms of the entire Tanzimat period. Firstly the decree dealt with administration and government; secondly with the welfare of the Ottoman subjects; and thirdly with the status of the non-Muslim citizens and with the legal basis of the Empire. After a short prologue, which attributed the decline of the Empire to the failure to preserve the Holy Law, the *hat* suggested the introduction of 'new laws' (or 'new rules': *kavanin-i cedide*),⁴ in order to give the

¹ For text, see *Düstur* (Istanbul, 1871-1928), i. 4-7. A modern Turkish transliteration in Enver Ziya Karal, *Osmanlı Tarihi* (Ankara, 1947), v. 263-6. English translation in J. C. Hurewitz, *Diplomacy in the Near and Middle East* (Princeton, 1956), i. 113-16.

² Bailey, pp. 186, 192; Lewis, op. cit., pp. 103-4.

³ Cf. Ahmed Cevdet, *Tezâkir* (Ankara, 1953), i. 7; Davison, *Reform*, p. 38; Lewis, op. cit., p. 105; Temperley, pp. 160, 170. For other comments on the motives behind the Gülhane decree, see Bailey, pp. 181, 186, 228; Şâti' al-Ḥusri, *al-Bilād al-'Arabiyya wa'l-dawla al-'Uthmāniyya* (Beirut, 1960), p. 91.

⁴ *Kavanin*, pl. of *kanun*. Note that although in the theory of the Muslim jurists there was no law other than the Holy Law, Ottoman Sultans used nevertheless to issue *kanuns* to complement or correct the *Şariat* and this practice was

PART V

*The State of the Christians and Jews
and the Muslims' attitude towards them*

'The Muslims and the other communities who are among the subjects of our Sublime Sultanate shall be the objects of our imperial favours without exception.'

(From the Gülhane edict of 1839)

THE most outstanding and remarkable reform of the Tanzimat was, without question, the fundamental change it tried to effect in the status of the non-Muslim population within the Ottoman Empire. Never before had any attempt been made by an Islamic state officially to treat its Muslim, Christian, and Jewish subjects as equals.

Until the Gülhane edict of 1839, Christians and Jews alike, although enjoying a certain degree of autonomy within their *millets* and allowed to practice their religions, had been regarded as second-class citizens and as such were subjected to various discriminatory laws and practices. Firstly, they had to pay special poll-tax (*cizye* or *harac*) for the protection (*zimmet*) granted to them by the Muslim ruler. Secondly, the administration of justice was weighted heavily against the *zimmi*s; for example, their evidence was not accepted in a court of law against a Muslim, and in a case of murder of a non-Muslim by a Muslim, the latter was usually not condemned to death. In addition, Christians and Jews were not eligible for appointments to the highest administrative posts; they were forbidden to carry arms (i.e. they could not serve in the army), to ride horses in towns, and to wear Muslims' dress. Even in purely ecclesiastical matters the *zimmi*s, or *reaya*, were unequally treated; they were not permitted to build places of worship, to hang or ring church bells, or to carry crosses in public.¹

This was basically the position of both Christians and Jews in pre-reform Syria and Palestine. And although in some places and

¹ Davison, *Turkish Attitudes*, p. 845; Gibb and Bowen, ii. 208. For the original use of the terms *harac* and *reaya*, see *ibid.* ii, 10 n.; i. 48 n., 158.

under certain rulers the Syrian *reaya* were tolerated and esteemed, some of their members even being employed in senior administrative posts,¹ they were generally exposed to insults by, and oppression and violence from, both the local authorities and the Muslim population. Many governors would, for example, demand excessive taxes from the non-Muslims or impose on them various illegal tributes and dues. Similarly, Muslims would often assault and humiliate Christians and Jews, force them to sweep the streets or carry burdens, or would even dishonour their dead.²

It is true that the first reforming Sultans, notably Mahmud II, tried, albeit in vain, to prevent the maltreatment of the non-Muslims in Syria and Palestine as well as in other Ottoman provinces.³ But no attempt was made to change their inferior legal status and make them equal to the Muslims.

The first ruler who, as already mentioned, de facto placed the non-Muslims of Syria and Palestine on the same footing as their Muslim countrymen, was the Egyptian Ibrāhīm Paşa. Under his rule Christians and, to a lesser extent, Jews, enjoyed full equality with Muslims. They were appointed to the local *meclises*, accepted by the civil service in greater numbers, and some of them, notably Christians, occupied high positions in the new Syrian administration. The non-Muslims were also allowed to build and repair their places of worship almost without limit and were permitted to ride horses in towns and wear the same dress as Muslims. But, and it was an important proviso, this equality enjoyed by the Syrian *reaya*, was dictated and imposed from above, markedly in opposition to the wishes of the Muslim majority, and only Ibrāhīm's iron hand could prevent this majority from violating the minorities' rights.⁴

The reforms of the Tanzimat, which were first proclaimed in the Syrian provinces on the Ottoman restoration there, formally provided the *reaya* with essentially the same status and privileges they had actually enjoyed under the Egyptian régime.⁵ But the

¹ Al-'Awra, pp. 50, 159-66, 227; Burckhardt, pp. 14, 180, 292, 329, 332, 381, 652; Bodman, pp. 45, 98; Shamir, *The 'Azm*, p. 244.

² See above, p. 10.

³ See, for example, firman of Z 1246 (May-June 1831) ordering the protection of Jewish pilgrims to Jerusalem against excessive taxes; L. A. Mayer, 'Le-qorot ha-Yehudim be-Eretz-Israel', *Zion*, i, No. 4, pp. 5-7. See also firman of N 1223 (1808) in al-'Awra, pp. 95-96. See also, Bazili, i. 171; Temperley, pp. 40-41.

⁴ See above, pp. 17-18.

⁵ But cf. above, p. 20.

attempt by the Turkish government to re-establish these privileges was now met with a more effective Muslim opposition, which produced considerable prejudice.

Syrian Muslim opposition to the *reaya*'s new status was evident in all aspects of life, its main expression being again the use of violence: Christians and Jews were, as in the pre-reform period, occasionally subjected to insult and threat, robbery and attack, and sometimes even to murder by their Muslim countrymen.¹ But in addition to these acts of oppression, Muslim aggression against the Christians found a new and horrible form of violence. For the first time there were a number of anti-Christian riots or massacres, the principal of which occurred in 1850 in Aleppo, in 1856 in Nablus, and finally, and most seriously, in Damascus in 1860. In these events a great number of Christians were massacred, but Jews were untouched.²

In trying to examine the state of the non-Muslims in the various aspects of life and to analyse the factors behind the Muslims' divergent attitude towards Christians and Jews, we shall see that while the traditional religious attitude towards all *reaya* communities was basically unchanged during the Tanzimat, new rivalries had entered the scene, especially on the Christian front. Social and economic forces, and particularly political considerations, were now also at stake. And the Christians by their proud conduct and open enjoyment of their new privileges in almost every area of life, as well as by their strong links with foreign powers, formed a more provoking target for Muslim aggression than the humble and discreet Jews.

¹ See, for example, A.E. Jérusalem, i, from Lantivy, No. 16, 10 Aug. 1843; A.E. iv, from Botta, No. 51, 18 July 1853; collection of various files from the Germau Consulate in Jerusalem (1838-1939), Report from Gaza, dated 27 July 1855; F.O. 195/207, Werry to Canning, No. 1, Aleppo, 13 Jan. 1844; F.O. 78/1217, Finn to Clarendon, No. 62, Jerusalem, 15 Sept. 1856; Manşūr, p. 88; Murray, ii. 333; Neale, pp. 278-9; Taoutel, ii. 102; iii. 163.

² On these events see below, pp. 226 ff..

XIV

THE RIGHTS OF THE NON-MUSLIMS VIS-À-VIS MUSLIM OPPOSITION

A. Religious rights

IT is evident that the Tanzimat reformers were greatly concerned with the religious freedom of their non-Muslim subjects. The *hat* of 1856 as well as many other firmans which were sent to the Syrian provinces both before and after 1856, insist on full freedom of worship for the *reaya*, going so far as to make interference a punishable offence.¹

In fact, however, the religious liberty of the non-Muslims, although growing considerably during the period under survey was still far from being complete, chiefly because of the Muslims' vigorous opposition. In certain cases the *reaya* were not allowed by the Muslim population to build or repair places of worship; some churches and synagogues were closed by force or were converted into mosques and others were violated by conservative Muslims and sometimes even by soldiers.² Another privilege which was not always preserved was that 'no one shall be compelled to change his religion or faith'.³ A noticeable number of

¹ See, for example, firman to Tayyar Paşa, governor of Jerusalem and Gaza of Evail CA 1257, in *Accounts and Papers*, LX (1843), pt. i, No. 8, Ponsonby to Palmerston, Therapia, 21 June 1841 (also in Khazin, i. 52-53); firman of Evahir B 1257 in H. Z. Hirshberg, 'Ha-mifneh be-ma'amada shel Yerushalayim' in *Yad Yosef Yizhak Rivlin* (Ramat Gan, 5724), pp. 95-98; firman of Gurre L 1268 in Jaffa *Sijill*, No. 18; firman of June 1853 in Robinson, p. 24; Penal Code, Paras. 132, 133, in Bucknill and Utidjian, p. 101; see also Finn, i. 157; Muḥammad Farīd, *Ta'rikh al-dawla al-'Uthmāniyya* (Egypt, 1893), pp. 294-5; Taoutel, iii. 128.

² F.O. 195/234, Rose to Canning, No. 13, Beirut, 8 Mar. 1844; F.O. 78/801, Wood to Palmerston, No. 27, Damascus, 29 Oct. 1849; F.O. 78/1383, Finn to Clarendon, No. 13, Jerusalem, 20 July 1858; F.O. 78/1538, Skene to Bulwer, No. 4, encl. in Skene to Russell, No. 16, Aleppo, 14 Apr. 1860; A.E. Jérusalem, vi, from de Barrère, No. 12, 3 Aug. 1858; A.E. Damas, v, from Outrey, No. 77, 14 Aug. 1859; *Irade H.*, No. 9507/9, 28 B 1276. Note that more cases of violation of churches occurred during the events of 1850 in Aleppo and those of 1860 in Damascus.

³ See the *Hatt-ı Hümayun* of 1856; compare firman to the Jewish *Hahambaşı*, in Jerusalem, Evahir B 1257, in Hirshberg, *Rivlin*, pp. 95-98; Manşūr, p. 90.

Christians and Jews, particularly children, were forced to adopt Islam, and only a small proportion of these returned to their original faith after intervention by the Pasha (usually under a consul's pressure).¹ Similarly, although the Imperial order of March 1844, that apostasy from Islam would not be punished by death, was generally kept in Syria,² Muslim converts to Christianity were usually persecuted and forced to leave their homes in order to save their lives.³

But while anti-religious activities against Jews did not go beyond these traditional acts of intolerance, Christians were subject to further aggression because of the new privileges they were not tardy to practise in public: in several towns church bells were rung, crosses carried in processions, wine shops opened in market places, and corpses carried by men instead of on animals. Such deeds strongly irritated the Muslims almost everywhere, and in some places they provoked anti-Christian outbreaks.⁴ The conspicuous event of this kind was the grave massacre in Aleppo during the 1850 revolt, in which many Christians were killed and their houses and churches sacked and burnt. That these riots were largely caused by Christian demonstration of their religious privileges is apparent from the following evidence: firstly, according to Consul-General Rose: 'The Greek Catholic Patriarch Maximos is accused of having excited the ill will of the Mussulmans by a sort of triumphant entry which he made not long since into Aleppo with much pomp and great display of costly church ornaments.'⁵

¹ F.O. 195/196, Wood to Canning, No. 42, Damascus, 26 June 1842; F.O. 195/207, Moore to Canning, No. 1, Aleppo, 5 Feb. 1842; compare A.E. Alep, i, from Guys, No. 68, 16 Oct. 1841; A.E. Damas, iii, from de Barrière, No. 24, 27 May 1855.

² F.O. 78/1220, Barker to Clarendon, No. 3, Aleppo, 25 Feb. 1856; compare Davison, *Reform*, p. 55; Young, ii, 11. But see also Temperley pp. 225-9.

³ F.O. 78/622, Wood to Aberdeen, No. 28, Damascus, 3 Sept. 1845; F.O. 78/863, Kiyat to Moore, encl. No. 1 in Moore to Palmerston, No. 1, Beirut, 2 Jan. 1850; CM/041 from Klein, 2 Feb. 1853; Mansur, pp. 89-90; Velde, i, 133-4; compare Davison, *Attitudes*, p. 800; Doughty, ii, 372-3.

⁴ *Irade M.V.*, No. 5184, 19 R 1266; F.O. 78/705, Finn to Palmerston, No. 36, Jerusalem, 3 Dec. 1847; F.O. 78/836, Rose to Canning, No. 48, encl. in Rose to Palmerston, No. 49, Beirut, 5 Nov. 1850; *Almuwāl al-Nasirī bi'l-da al-harb al-qām* (MS. No. 66, A.U.B.), pp. 26-27; Finn, ii, 424-5; Taoutel, iii, 133; Walpole, iii, 419-20; Urquhart, ii, 68-69.

⁵ F.O. 78/836, Rose to Canning, No. 48, encl. in Rose to Palmerston, No. 49, Beirut, 5 Nov. 1850; see also *Rambles*, p. 241; Wortabet, ii, 81. For details on the riots, see A.E. Alep, ii, from de Lesseps, No. 9, 29 Oct. 1850. See also above, pp. 105-6 ff.

Secondly, some of the conditions made by the Aleppo rebels for laying down their arms speak for themselves: 'Bells must not be rung, neither must the cross be carried in procession.'¹ Thirdly, there is the fact that the Jews of Aleppo were not affected at all during these events.²

Indeed, the gravity of the 1850 riots in Aleppo, a city traditionally famous for its tolerance,³ clearly indicates how intense was Muslim opposition to the Christians' new liberties.

Yet, despite this vigorous opposition, the Syrian non-Muslims did enjoy on the whole, particularly during the 1850s, greater freedom of worship than ever before within the Ottoman Empire, thanks mainly to the government's protection.⁴ A considerable number of churches, convents, and synagogues, as well as other religious institutions, were repaired or built by permission from Istanbul.⁵ Christian Patriarchs and Jewish Rabbis were held in great esteem and a few were honoured with Imperial medals.⁶ Religious education was given to children in an increasing number of missionary schools, bringing about enlightenment and cultural revival especially among the Christian communities.⁷

B. Social and Economic Conditions

Better education and competence made the Christians and Jews also more acceptable to public administration; their share in the

¹ See list of conditions in *Irade D.*, No. 13185/14, 26 Z 1266—the document facing p. 105 above. See also a petition by Aleppo notables in *Irade D.*, No. 13268/6, Guire M 1267.

² *Irade D.*, No. 13185, 14 Z 1266; F.O. 195/302, Werry to Rose, No. 43, encl. in Werry to Canning, No. 8, Aleppo, 26 Oct. 1850.

³ Cf. Gibb and Bowen, i, 309-10. On the change of atmosphere in Aleppo towards intolerance, see F.O. 78/500, Moore to Aberdeen, No. 5, Aleppo, 27 Jan. 1842; Paton, pp. 260-1; *Rambles*, p. 43; Taoutel, iii, 31, 45.

⁴ See F.O. 78/1217, Finn to Clarendon, No. 1, Jerusalem, 7 Jan. 1856; F.O. 78/1538, Skene to Bulwer, No. 29, encl. in Skene to Russell, No. 51, Aleppo, 23 Aug. 1860; A.E. Damas, ii, from Segur, No. 30, Oct. 1851; Finn, i, 222; ii, 449-50; Mansur, p. 88; Wortabet, ii, 282-3.

⁵ See, for example, *Mithnime*, No. 257, p. 54, firman of Eyahtar N 1264; No. 258, p. 25, Eyahtar C 1267; No. 260, p. 219, Eyahtar Saf. 1276; *Irade H.*, No. 4094, 12 R 1268; No. 6965, 15 M 1273; No. 8822, 12 B 1275; F.O. 78/622, Wood to Aberdeen, No. 24, Damascus, 20 July 1845; F.O. 195/302, Werry to Canning, No. 4, Aleppo, 8 Sept. 1849; al-Dibs, viii, 786-7; Finn, ii, 462; Mansur, pp. 87, 90, 95; Paton, p. 25; Schwartz, *Tau'at*, p. 491; Taoutel, ii, 79, 86; iii, 129-34.

⁶ See, *Irade H.*, No. 659, 3 N 1257; No. 9957, 5 CA 1277; *Ceride-i Havadis*, 26 C 1277.

⁷ See, for example, *Almuwāl*, MS., pp. 27-28; *Haar al-tithām*, p. 223; see also Hourani, *Perilous Crescent*, p. 50.

Ottoman civil service was indeed considerable, although admittedly not in all departments were they fairly represented¹ and from time to time they were still arbitrarily dismissed from their offices.² Many Syrian Christians served, for example, as clerks and scribes in various government departments, in the *mecides*, and as private secretaries to Turkish Pashas.³ Some of them managed to reach comparatively high positions, particularly after 1856 at the time when the first Christian public officials in Syria were granted the titles of *Bey* and *Efendi*.⁴ In a number of towns Christians and Jews managed to control, as in the past, the local financial administration, namely, the offices of accountants, customs officers, and the like.⁵ And although the great Jewish and Christian Bankers (*sarraf*) had been deprived, under the new administration, of their old *berats* (patents or warrants) as heads of the provincial treasury, other members of their communities continued to occupy senior offices in this department, particularly in Damascus and Aleppo.⁶ In Damascus, for example, the government financial administration was apparently based almost entirely on Christian officials, who became thus indispensable: 'The persons who managed the affairs of the Pashalik were Christians, they kept the public accounts and grew richer in the

¹ F.O. 78/1521, Finn to Bulwer, encl. No. 1 in Finn to Russell, No. 21, Jerusalem, 19 July 1860; Worraber, i, 34-35; compare al-Husri, p. 92; Karal, v, 260; Mardin, p. 15.

² F.O. 78/456, Major Wilbraham's Report, encl. No. 2 in Rose to Palmerston, No. 71, Beirut, 23 July 1841; F.O. 78/622, Wood to Aberdeen, No. 38, Damascus, 10 Nov. 1845; F.O. 195/219, Calvert to Canning, No. 10, Damascus, 2 May 1850; compare al-Jinān, ii (1872), pp. 27, 38.

³ See, for example, *Trade D.*, No. 5, ZA 1263; *Trade M.V.*, No. 18868/5, 21 C 1276; Jaffa *Sijill*, No. 13, 27 N 1256; F.O. 78/837, Wood to Palmerston, No. 3, Damascus, 6 Mar. 1850; F.O. 78/1217, Finn to Clarendon, No. 38, Jerusalem, 26 May 1856; Nawfal, *Tarāḫiṣ*, pp. 53, 63-65, 88, 91-92; Velde, i, 362; Taoutel, iii, 130-1; al-Shidyāq, i, 226; compare Karal, v, 260.

⁴ *Trade D.*, No. 27934, 20 CA 1275; F.O. 78/1219, Moore to Clarendon, No. 25, Beirut, 2 June 1856; F.O. 78/1217, Finn to Clarendon, No. 38, Jerusalem, 26 May 1856; al-Ba alpakī, p. 106; al-Dih, vii, 741-2; Nawfal, op. cit., pp. 65-66; on the titles *Efendi* and *Bey*, see Sertoglu, pp. 39, 87.

⁵ See *Trade D.*, No. 10667, 16 R 1205; *Trade M.V.*, No. 7013, 13 S 1267; *Ceudet D.*, No. 15561, 11 CA 1265; Jaffa *Sijill*, No. 13, 27 L 1256 and 27 N 1267; A.E. Damas, i, from Munton, No. 1, 3 Feb. 1842; al-Ba alpakī, p. 105; Paton, p. 39; Walpole, iii, 174.

⁶ *Ceudet D.*, Malise No. 19213, L 1261; Y. Lewton, *Sefer nokhah ha-shulhan* (Lzmit, 5628 (1867/8)), p. 112b. Compare F.O. 195/170, Werry to Ponsonby, No. 1, Damascus, 14 Jan. 1841; Nawfal, op. cit., p. 62; Taoutel, iii, 33. On the term *berat*, see Sertoglu, p. 42.

employment'; and when, during the critical days of June 1860, they failed to attend to their duties, government offices became idle.¹

Another economic field which was dominated by Christians and Jews was the country's major commerce; as already pointed out, they controlled the growing foreign trade of Syria and thus were more flourishing than ever.²

Hence it emerges that the Syrian *reeya* not only managed remarkably to improve their economic and social conditions under the Tanzimat,³ but in many respects became more advanced than, or gained advantage over, their Muslim countrymen, who for their part felt themselves affected or deprived of their due. 'The Christian traders were more prosperous than the Mussulmans';⁴ Christian tax-collectors and customs officials levied from Muslims taxes and duties which sometimes were above the official rate;⁵ Jewish and Christian moneylenders would lend money to Muslims at an exorbitant interest.⁶ Even Muslim notables in some places found themselves in debt since they could no longer extort money from rich Christians and Jews as they had done in the past.⁷

Muslim reaction to this state of affairs varied; in certain circles it was one of retaliation. According to Consul Finn, 'Difficulties are put in the way of Christians exercising some trades which have been of old time in the hands of the Moslems'.⁸ In Damascus,

¹ See F.O. 78/1520, Brant to Bulwer, No. 40, encl. in Brant to Russell, No. 17, Damascus, 6 Sept. 1860; Mishāqā, MS., p. 350.

² See above, p. 182. Cf. *Byzla Barā*, No. 36; Temperley, pp. 240-1.

³ Compare F.O. 78/1454, Finn to Palmerston, No. 1, Jerusalem, 1 Jan. 1859; F.O. 78/1538, Skene to Bulwer, No. 27, encl. in Skene to Russell, No. 47, Aleppo, 4 Aug. 1860; CM/041, from Klein, 2 Feb. 1852; Finn, i, 202.

⁴ F.O. 78/1520, Brant to Bulwer, No. 40, encl. in Brant to Russell, No. 17, Damascus, 6 Sept. 1860; see also F.O. 78/1452, Skene to Bulwer, separate, encl. in Skene to Malmesbury, No. 42, Aleppo, 30 June 1859; F.O. 78/1383, Finn to Clarendon, No. 1, Jerusalem, 1 Jan. 1858; *Al-hawl*, MS., pp. 27-28; Edwards, pp. 82-83; *Ḥasr al-lithām*, p. 223; Jessup, i, 165; compare Farley, *Turkey*, pp. 36-37; MacFarlane, ii, 258-9.

⁵ See Finn, i, 286; F.O. 78/958, Calvert to Clarendon, No. 12, Beirut, 29 June 1853; compare *Trade D.*, No. 10349, 3 Saf. 1265.

⁶ F.O. 195/207, Werry to Canning, No. 16, Aleppo, 9 Sept. 1843; Segur, pp. 14-15.

⁷ See F.O. 78/1452, Skene to Bulwer, separate, encl. in Skene to Malmesbury, No. 42, Aleppo, 30 June 1859; *Ramhles*, p. 241. But in a number of places, notably the Jerusalem area, local notables and chiefs continued to extort money from Jewish communities and Christian convents; see F.O. 195/309, Finn to Redcliffe, No. 26, Jerusalem, 11 Aug. 1853.

⁸ F.O. 78/1521, Finn to Bulwer, encl. No. 1 in Finn to Russell, No. 27, Jerusalem, 19 July 1860.

for example, the Muslim weavers, who were apparently affected by the import of European-manufactured goods, tried to undercut the livelihood of their Christian colleagues: under their pressure the local *meclis* issued an order in 1842 forbidding the Christian craftsmen from producing a certain kind of silk material.¹ As for the reaction of the general Muslim public, here again elements of demonstration were not missing from the Christians' conduct, and accordingly they produced strong ill-feeling among the Muslims. Thus Christians riding horses in certain towns or wearing Muslim dress were occasionally assaulted;² 'The splendid houses built by the rich class of Christians excited jealousy and their general prosperity tended to create in the Mussulmans feelings of envy',³ as well as 'vicious passions' to loot and sack, all of which was actually expressed when the opportunity occurred as in Aleppo in 1850 and in Damascus in 1860.⁴

But with the exception of these cases, the Syrian Christian and Jewish subjects did enjoy now, on the whole, greater security of life and property as well as economic prosperity, than during the pre-reform era,⁵ and this again chiefly owing to government protection and foreign support.

C. Political inequality

Yet, in one major aspect of life, in the area of political rights, the Syrian *reyya* did not reach the same advanced position as in the religious and social-economic spheres.

Christians and Jews continued, during the early Tanzimat period, to be unequal before the law of the state and its institutions. For one thing, they had still to pay the discriminatory poll-tax (*cizye*), although the method of its collection was not as harsh as in the past;

¹ F.O. 78/499, Wood to Canning, No. 45, Damascus, 12 July 1842.

² F.O. 78/449, Moore to Palmerston, No. 25, Beirut, 4 May 1841; F.O. 78/801, Wood to Palmerston, No. 7, Damascus, 13 Mar. 1849; A.E. Alep, iii, from Geoffroy, No. 2, 23 Aug. 1860; al-Bashā, pp. 234 ff.; Bazili, ii, 4; Farley, *The Masacres*, p. 75; *Ḥasr al-ithām*, p. 71; Khazn, i, 78; Jessup, i, 28; Porter, *Damascus*, i, 143; Taoutel, iii, 26, 31. But see F.O. 78/1217, Finn to Clarendon, No. 1, Jerusalem, 7 Jan. 1856; Walpole, i, 98-99; Wortabet, i, 178.

³ See F.O. 78/1520, Brant to Bulwer, No. 40, encl. in Brant to Russell, No. 17, Damascus, 6 Sept. 1860.

⁴ F.O. 78/836, Rose to Canning, No. 48, encl. in Rose to Palmerston, No. 49, Beirut, 5 Nov. 1850; see also *Aḥwāl*, MS., p. 28; Finn, i, 218.

⁵ Cf. Finn, i, 193-6 n., 202; CM/641, from Klein, 2 Feb. 1852; *Ḥasr al-ithām*, p. 50; Paton, p. 260; see also F.O. 78/1538, Skene to Bulwer, No. 27, encl. in Skene to Russell, No. 47, Aleppo, 4 Aug. 1860.

it was now collected by the heads of the communities, rather than by the oppressive tax-collectors.¹ It is true that on 7 May 1855 the *cizye* was finally abolished, together with another discriminatory measure against the *reyya*, the prohibition to carry arms. But in fact the non-Muslims were not conscripted even then, but were required to pay instead an exemption tax called *bedel*. This tax was levied in the same way as the abolished poll-tax, and was, of course, regarded as such by the *reyya* of the Empire including those in the Syrian provinces.² The Muslims admittedly were also allowed now to buy exemption from military service, but for a much higher sum than the *bedel* paid by the *reyya*; and unlike the Muslims, the non-Muslims did not have any choice but to pay the tax. In this sense inequality between the two groups was further maintained.

Another old restriction on the legal rights of the Christians and Jews, which was revived during the Tanzimat, was that they were forbidden to own Muslim (men and women) slaves.³ In addition the *reyya* in certain parts of Syria were not allowed to own certain kinds of land while in other parts they would face great difficulties when trying to buy it.⁴ Moreover, and very significantly, government orders were periodically received in some places forbidding Muslims to sell land and immovables to non-Muslims.⁵ Also contrary to the Tanzimat instructions was the interference of the Muslim *mahkeme* in cases of inheritance by Christian minors.⁶

¹ *Takwīm-i 'Vekayī*, p. 238, 3 M 1258; Lûtf, *Tarih*, vi, 69; Engelhardt, i, 40, 51; F.O. 78/872, Wood to Palmerston, No. 11, Damascus, 29 Mar. 1851; Taoutel, iii, 49, 89, 160.

² F.O. 78/1220, Barker to Redcliffe, No. 28, encl. in Barker to Clarendon, No. 13, Aleppo, 30 July 1856; F.O. 78/1218, Finn to Clarendon, No. 32, Jerusalem, 7 Nov. 1856; A.E. Damas, iv, from Outrey, No. 14, 16 Aug. 1856; Finn, i, 172-3; Mansûr, p. 287; *Rambles*, pp. 58-59. Compare Lewis, *Emergence*, p. 114; Young, v, 275-6. On the *bedel*, see also *Badal* in Elʿi; *Bedel-i Askeri*, in IA.

³ F.O. 195/207, Werry to Canning, No. 17, Aleppo, 23 Sept. 1843; Taoutel, ii, 102; iii, 64; see also Young, ii, 171-5.

⁴ F.O. 78/1521, Finn to Bulwer, encl. No. 1 in Finn to Russell, No. 21, Jerusalem, 19 July 1860; F.O. 78/1538, Skene to Bulwer, No. 27, encl. in Skene to Russell, No. 47, Aleppo, 4 Aug. 1860; *Rambles*, p. 42.

⁵ 'Mant' al-muslim min bay'i aradūh wa-sā'ir amlikatih ilā al-dhimmiyyin al-ra'iyā', Jaffa *Sijill*, No. 18, orders of Eṣvāl Saf. and 14 Saf. 1268; see also A.E. Alep, i, from Guys, No. 34, 28 Sept. 1845; letter from the Greek Catholic community in Aleppo to Canning, dated 12 Azar 1846, encl. in F.O. 195/207; Paton, p. 32.

⁶ F.O. 78/1220, Wood to Redcliffe, No. 2, encl. in Wood to Clarendon, No. 3, Damascus, 18 Jan. 1856; F.O. 78/1219, Moore to Redcliffe, No. 40,

this interference which, incidentally, was not applied to Jews, became apparently so troublesome that in 1861 the *Porte* issued a special decree prohibiting the Muslim court from taking any part in such cases.¹

Rather more harmful to the legal rights of the *reyya* was the *mahkeme's* practice of rejecting in all circumstances evidence by a Christian or a Jew against a Muslim.² Furthermore, up to the early 1850s, non-Muslims' testimony was utterly discounted also in the *meclis*³ which would sometimes refer a case to the *mahkeme* where non-Muslims' evidence was essentially invalid.

It is true that in 1847 validity was granted to non-Muslims' testimony in the newly established Ottoman mixed courts.⁴ But these courts for criminal and commercial cases were not established in Syria for some years: at Beirut in 1851 and at Damascus and Aleppo in 1854.⁵ The new tribunals would then usually accept *reyya's* evidence against Muslims and thereby do justice to many non-Muslims.⁶ Nevertheless there were still instances in which the criminal and commercial courts would reject such evidence; in one case, for example, 'the court endeavoured to persuade the (Muslim) offender to plead guilty and to submit to a slight punishment, rather than to establish a precedent opposed . . . to their faith'. When the Muslim refused, the court denounced him but would not accept any evidence.⁷ Sometimes these courts encl. in Moore to Clarendon, No. 35, Beirut, 14 July 1856; A.E. Alep, iii, No. 23, 14 Sept. 1861.

¹ See Law of 7 Saf. 1278, in Düstur, i, 298-300. As for the Jews, see firman to the Jewish *Hakambay* in Jerusalem, of Evahir B 1257, in Hirschberg, *Rehlin*, pp. 95 ff.; compare Young, i, 321.

² F.O. 78/622, Wood to Canning, No. 13, encl. in Wood to Aberdeen, No. 21, Damascus, 24 June 1854; F.O. 78/1116, Moore to Redcliffe, No. 12, encl. in Moore to Clarendon, No. 20, Beirut, 8 Mar. 1855; F.O. 78/1521, Finn to Bulwer, encl. No. 1 in Finn to Russell, No. 21, Jerusalem, 19 July 1860; Finn, i, 177; Urquhart, p. 259.

³ *Accounts and Papers*, lx (1843) pt. i, No. 7, Wood to Rilat, encl. in Ponsonby to Palmerston, Theresa, 27 May 1841; F.O. 195/320, Rose to Cowley, No. 2, Beirut, 19 Jan. 1848. Compare MacFarlane, i, 184, 334, 337.

⁴ Engelhardt, i, 83-84; Ubicini, i, 175.

⁵ See above, p. 155. On the firman making the non-Muslims' evidence in these courts valid, see F.O. 195/309, Finn to Rose, No. 4, Jerusalem, 3 Feb. 1853; F.O. 195/458, Wood to Canning, No. 20, Damascus, 14 June 1854.

⁶ F.O. 78/871, Rose to Canning, No. 5, encl. in Rose to Palmerston, No. 6, Beirut, 4 Feb. 1851; A.E. Damas, iii, from de Barrère, No. 18, 15 Dec. 1854; F.O. 78/1630, Memo. by Vice-Consul White encl. in Duffrein to Russell, No. 113, Beirut, 10 May 1861.

⁷ F.O. 78/1029, Wood to Clarendon, No. 50, Damascus, 6 Sept. 1854; see

were induced to decline, by the provincial *meclis* to whom they were subordinated, non-Muslims' evidence.¹ The *meclis* itself, while acting as a judicial body, continued during the 1850s, as in the 1840s, only occasionally to receive *reyya's* testimony against Muslims, normally under pressure exerted on it by a foreign consul through the Pasha.² In many cases the council would reject such evidence, particularly when it was presided over by the *kadi*.³ Instead, the *meclis* would frequently 'rather condemn at once a Mussulman in favour of a Christian without recording testimony than accept non-Muslim evidence'.⁴

Thus, although Christians and Jews in certain parts of Syria, notably the province of Beirut, began gradually, in the course of the 1850s, to enjoy greater equality and justice in the judicial administration,⁵ this was by no means complete, nor were the new legal privileges applied everywhere in the country. Consul Skene, for example, reports from Aleppo in 1859 that: 'The evidence of Christians is not yet received by any court notwithstanding all that has been said, written and proclaimed on the subject.'⁶

The non-Muslims of Syria and Palestine were subject to unequal treatment not only in the administration of justice, but also in other government institutions. The provincial *meclis*, apart from cases of misjudgement would, in effect, occasionally discriminate against Christians and Jews in matters of taxation, in economic affairs, and sometimes even in religious matters.⁷

also F.O. 78/1388, Brant to Bulwer, encl. No. 2 in Brant to Malmesbury, No. 53, Damascus, 14 Dec. 1858.

¹ See, for example, F.O. 78/1388, Brant to Bulwer, encl. No. 1, in Brant to Malmesbury, No. 53, Damascus, 14 Dec. 1858.

² See, for example, F.O. 78/1038, Moore to Clarendon, No. 38, Beirut, 28 Aug. 1854.

³ See F.O. 78/1116, Moore to Redcliffe, No. 1, encl. in Moore to Clarendon, No. 2, Beirut, 2 Jan. 1855; F.O. 78/1519, Moore to Bulwer, No. 69, encl. in Moore to Russell, No. 42, Beirut, 10 Sept. 1860.

⁴ F.O. 78/1524, Finn to Bulwer, encl. No. 1 in Finn to Russell, No. 21, Jerusalem, 19 July 1860.

⁵ See F.O. 78/1031, Moore to Redcliffe, No. 69, encl. in Moore to Clarendon, No. 61, Beirut, 16 Dec. 1854; *The Times and recent events in Turkey* (London, 1853), p. 258, in Urquhart's Papers, No. 257; compare Jessup, i, 269; Davison, *Reform*, p. 97.

⁶ *Rambles*, p. 67; F.O. 78/1452, Skene to Malmesbury, No. 20, Aleppo, 31 Mar. 1859; see also F.O. 78/1220, Werry to Redcliffe, No. 35, encl. in Werry to Clarendon, No. 15, Aleppo, 24 Jan. 1856.

⁷ See F.O. 78/499, Wood to Canning, No. 45, Damascus, 12 July 1842; A.E. Damas, i, from Devolzy, No. 7, 5 Dec. 1843; F.O. 78/714, Timoni to Cowley,

The non-Muslim members of the *meclis* were by no means in a position to avoid or check such acts of unequal treatment against members of their communities, since they were themselves mistreated and under-represented in the *meclis*. Indeed, with the exception of the provincial *meclis* of Beirut whose seats were equally shared by Muslims and Christians,¹ all other provincial councils in Syria and Palestine allotted few seats to the *reaya* deputies. The *meclis* of Jerusalem consisted, for instance, of about seven to ten Muslim members as opposed to four to five non-Muslim ones, representing a Jewish and Christian population which greatly outnumbered that of the Muslims.² In Aleppo no *reaya* deputy was admitted to the *meclis* during the first years of the 1840s; later on two Christian members were admitted, but not a Jewish one.³ The *meclis-i eyalet* of Damascus included two Christians and a Jew, as against thirteen to twenty Muslim members; but the former were compelled to withdraw because of molestation within the first years of the 1840s and were not restored before 1850.⁴

Ill-treatment of *reaya* deputies was not restricted to Damascus; it was to be observed in all other areas. The English consuls in the Syrian centres described the position of the non-Muslim members of the *meclis* as follows:

they 'rarely attend and when they are called, they are seated on the extreme end of the mat but not on the Divan . . .'; 'their Mussulman colleagues made them light their pipes . . .'; 'they take no part in the deliberations and are treated with utter disregard, never venturing to express dissent in any decision even though it be calculated to injure their

No. 26, encl. in Timoni to Palmerston, No. 21, Damascus, 8 Sept. 1847; F.O. 78/910, Wood to Malmesbury, No. 13, Damascus, 27 Apr. 1852; F.O. 78/1538, Skene to Bulwer, No. 40, encl. in Skene to Russell, No. 76, Aleppo, 15 Dec. 1860; see also Finn, II, 167; Taoutel, III, 163.

¹ See *Irade M.V.*, No. 5184, 19 R 1266; F.O. 78/499, Moore to Palmerston, No. 43, Beirut, 19 June 1841.

² F.O. 78/1521, Finn to Bulwer, encl. in Finn to Russell, No. 21, Jerusalem, 19 July 1860; compare *Irade D.*, No. 21422/7, Z 1271; *Ceddet Z.*, No. 2703, Kanun II, 1277; Finn, I, 178.

³ F.O. 195/207, Moore to Aberdeen, encl. No. 2 in Moore to Canning, No. 1, Aleppo, 5 Feb. 1842; cf. *Irade M.M.*, No. 219, 25 § 1271; *Ceddet D.*, No. 7367, 17 N 1273; *Irade M.V.*, No. 17507/4, 13 Z 1274.

⁴ F.O. 78/622, Wood to Canning, encl. No. 1 in Wood to Aberdeen, No. 21, Damascus, 24 June 1845; F.O. 195/219, Calvert to Canning, No. 10, Damascus, 2 May 1850.

brother Christians . . .'; 'sometimes . . . placing their seals falsely to Mazbattas merely from fear of displeasing the Mussulman members'.¹

Nevertheless, it is worthy of notice that the mere presence of Christian and Jewish deputies in local councils was a big step forward; moreover, in some places and under certain liberal and firm Pashas, non-Muslim councillors were treated well and were sometimes allowed to take a more active part in the *meclis*'s works.² Yet it remains true to say that during the years 1840-61 the status of the non-Muslim deputies in the *meclis*, like the general political position of the communities they represented, in fact continued to be unequal and inferior to their fellow Muslim subjects, and this despite the Tanzimat decrees.

In this context it should, however, be emphasized that it was not really so easy to create within only two decades full political equality between Muslims and non-Muslims, in a state which for centuries had been predominantly Muslim and in which inequality of the *reaya* had been a basic principle. Indeed, to give up this principle of inequality and segregation required of the Ottoman Muslims a much greater effort of renunciation than they were prepared to make.

¹ See respectively: F.O. 195/207, Werry to Canning, No. 23, Aleppo, 16 Dec. 1843; F.O. 78/622, op. cit.; F.O. 78/1538, Skene to Bulwer, No. 27, encl. in Skene to Russell, No. 47, Aleppo, 14 Aug. 1860; F.O. 78/1521, op. cit.

² See, for example, Jaffa *Sijill*, No. 18, 3 CA 1267; F.O. 78/872, Wood to Palmerston, No. 12, Damascus, 17 Apr. 1851; F.O. 78/1294, Finn to Clarendon, No. 1, Jerusalem, 1 Jan. 1857, in Hyamson, I, 246; Finn, II, 359.

MUSLIM-CHRISTIAN ANTAGONISM: THE POLITICAL MOTIVES

IF the Ottoman Muslims in general were unwilling to put up with the new equal status granted to the *reyya*, the Syrian Muslims who had experienced a similar situation under the Egyptian rule were even more reluctant to accept the non-Muslims as equals. Hence their reaction to the Gülhane decree soon after it was proclaimed in the country, as Consul-General Rose described in 1841:

It is a curious fact that only a little more than half a year after the reading and proclamation of the Hattı Sherif of Gülhane in this country there has been a general reaction in favour of the Koran and of the exclusive privileges of the Mahométans over Christians in diametrical opposition to the doctrine of equality of all before the law which is the essence of the Hattı Sherif.¹

This reaction, which represented also the Muslims' protest against the previous pro-Christian Egyptian régime,² was expressed by a wave of intense anti-Christian and, to some extent, anti-Jewish violence which swept the country for a while, and was in some places encouraged by the Druze-Maronite hostilities in Lebanon or by the weakness of the Turkish authorities.³

In later years and up to 1856 the degree of Muslim opposition varied from place to place. Being largely based on religious beliefs, Muslim political animosity was particularly intense in conserva-

¹ F.O. 78/457, Rose to Aberdeen, No. 110, Beirut, 12 Oct. 1841; see also F.O. 78/449, Wood to Ponsonby, Beirut, 17 Feb. 1841.

² In several places, for example, Muslims threatened to destroy churches which had been built or repaired during the Egyptian period; see F.O. 78/447, Wood to Aberdeen, No. 33, Damascus, 20 Nov. 1841; A.E. Alep, i, from Guys, No. 57, 15 Apr. 1841; al-Bāshā, p. 248.

³ F.O. 78/447, Wood to Aberdeen, No. 33, Damascus, 20 Nov. 1841; F.O. 105/170, Young to Rose, encl. in Young to Ponsonby, No. 12, Jerusalem, 4 June 1841; A.E. Alep, i, from Guys, No. 51, 20 Jan. 1841; al-Bāshā, pp. 234 ff.; Bazili, ii, 4; *Ḥaṣṣ al-ḥilām*, p. 71; Khazin, i, 78; Paton, p. 35; Taoutel, iii, 24-31; compare also *Irāde D.*, No. 2117/2, 29 CA 1257.

tive circles; and it was also bitter in areas where Muslims were faced with Christian rivalry or superiority in the economic field. Thus, for example, in a city like Damascus, which was very conservative and whose population was jealous of, if not affected by, the local Christians' prosperity, Muslim animosity was particularly strong and conspicuous.¹ But in towns where religious sensitivity was not great and where the economic circumstances were different, the Muslim attitude was milder. A report of June 1853 points out, for example, that 'thirteen years of peace, commercial emulation and industry had contributed to soften down the intolerance and hatred which the Mussulman of Beyrout were wont to exhibit towards their Christian countrymen and the foreigners'.² Even in a conservative town like Jerusalem, we are told 'old prejudices are abating and liberality of sentiment greatly increased . . . inasmuch as the Moslems live by the trade created by pilgrimage and by letting houses to Europeans'.³

But at the same time we are reminded that 'the feeling is merely dormant and that a very slight pretext will be sufficient to rouse it into dangerous action'.⁴ Such a pretext was sometimes supplied, as already noted, by the Christians themselves who behaved in some places in a provocative manner.

Yet it seems that on the whole Muslim opposition to the *reyya* and to their new official status was still immature and did not reach its peak during the *Hattı-ı Şerif* era. This was firstly because 'the Hattı Şerif of Gülhane . . . and the rules known as Tanzimat . . . were only accepted by the bigoted part of the Moslem population as temporary regulations of the Turks in their mistaken system dictated by the exacting Europeans'.⁵ Secondly, not only did the Gülhane edict speak in broad and cautious terms on the subject of equality, but in practice, during that period, Christians continued to be in general unequal to the Muslims while not everywhere did they dare to exercise all their new privileges. For

¹ On the strong anti-Christian feelings of the Muslim Damascenes during the period under survey, see, for instance, F.O. 195/194, Rose to Canning, No. 35, Beirut, 27 May 1842; A.E. Damas, ii, No. 24, 14 July 1851; Baedeker, p. 467; Wörbels, i, 179-80.

² F.O. 78/958, Calvert to Clarendon, No. 12, Beirut, 29 June 1853.

³ F.O. 78/1217, Finn to Clarendon, No. 1, Jerusalem, 7 Jan. 1856; see also F.O. 78/962, same to same, No. 8, Beirut, 29 June 1853; Finn, ii, 448. In a few places Muslim-Christian relations were even cordial: al-Jundi, pp. 251-2; Murray, ii, 359; compare also Farley, *The Massacres*, pp. 69-70.

⁴ See above n. 2.

⁵ Finn, ii, 446-7.

example, the *reaya*, as we know, did not stop paying the poll-tax and their evidence before the courts was still invalid; in a number of places they also continued to wear distinctive clothing and refrained from ringing church bells or from enjoying their other new religious liberties.

A. The Hatt-ı Hümayun: the turning point

A decisive change in the relations between Muslims and Christians came on the promulgation of the *Hatt-ı Hümayun* of February 1856. Unlike the Gülhane edict, the 1856 decree granted, for the first time and categorically, full equality of status to the 'Christian communities and the other non-Muslim subjects'. Its provisions openly provided the *reaya* with complete freedom of worship, equality in the administration of justice and in taxation; they also officially abolished the two major discriminatory measures which for centuries had indicated the inferior status of the non-Muslims: the poll-tax and the prohibition to carry arms.¹

It is therefore not surprising that the proclamation of the *Hatt-ı Hümayun* caused a sharp reaction among virtually all Muslims throughout the Empire. According to the Ottoman historian, Cevdet Paşa: 'Many Muslims began to grumble: "Today we have lost our sacred national rights which our ancestors gained with their blood; while the nation used to be the ruling nation it is now bereft of this sacred right. This is a day of tears and mourning for the Muslim brethren."'²

In Syria and Palestine Muslim reaction was perhaps even more intense: not only was the *huk* received with great dissatisfaction throughout the country,³ but, as will be seen later, there was anti-Christian rioting in several places, starting at Nablus in 1856 and reaching its climax in 1860 with the massacre in Damascus. The greater hostility of the Syrian Muslims was primarily due to the wider privileges now enjoyed by the local Christians;⁴ it was also

¹ See above, p. 195; see also Cevdet, *Tezâkir*, i. 67 ff.; Engelhardt, i. 126, 139 ff.

² Cevdet, op. cit. pp. 67-68; English translation taken from Mardin, p. 18; see also Davison, *Reform*, p. 58; id., *Turkish Attitudes*, pp. 858-61.

³ F.O. 78/1220, Barker to Redcliffe, No. 14, encl. in Barker to Clarendon, No. 8, Aleppo, 10 Mar. 1856; F.O. 78/1217, Finn to Redcliffe, No. 40, encl. in Finn to Clarendon, No. 42, Jerusalem, 23 June 1856; A.E. Damas, iv, from Outrey, No. 5, 25 Mar. 1856; CM/645 from Kruse, Jaffa, 1856; id. annual letter, Jaffa, 12 Feb. 1857; *Almanâk*, MS. p. 22; Finn, ii. 443; T'aouiel, ii. 90-92.

⁴ See above, pp. 191 ff.

a result of the way the Christians reacted after the proclamation of the 1856 *huk*. On the one hand, large sections of the Christian population were greatly dissatisfied with the *Hatt-ı Hümayun* or with its implementation. The clergy opposed the *huk* because it diminished their authority in the *millet*;¹ certain circles resented the idea of sharing equal rights with Jews whom they deeply despised and with whom they were engaged in economic rivalry;² and some Christian elements, desiring the downfall of the Empire, feared lest the reform programme should strengthen the declining Ottoman state.³ And as time went on there were many grievances about the actual results of the *Hatt-ı Hümayun*: 'The Christians complain that they are insulted by language in the streets—that they are not placed in equal rank at public courts with Moslem fellow subjects—are ousted from almost every office of government employment.'⁴

But on the other hand, the Christians lost no time in displaying their liberties in places where previously they had not dared to do so: church bells were hung and rung and feasts celebrated in public,⁵ and on a number of occasions they even went so far as to insult and attack Muslims.⁶ Above all, it was the question of military service over which the Christians behaved in a conspicuously ambivalent, if not provocative manner. Up to 1856 they were officially exempted from military service (nor in some instances could they conceal their joy and mockery when their

¹ A.E. Damas, iv, from Outrey, No. 5, 25 Mar. 1856; F.O. 78/1217, Finn to Clarendon, No. 22, Jerusalem, 10 Apr. 1856; cf. Engelhardt, i. 141, 147, 150; Karal, vi. 10-11.

² Cf. Cevdet, *Tezâkir*, i. 68; S. Dubnow, *Direv yemey 'am olam* (Tel-Aviv, 1952), p. 648.

³ Compare Davison, *Turkish Attitudes*, p. 853; see also Oliphant, p. 497.

⁴ F.O. 195/524, Finn to Redcliffe, No. 29, Jerusalem, 22 July 1857; see also A.E. Damas, iv, from Outrey, No. 19, 24 Oct. 1856; CM/645 from Kruse, Jaffa, 1856; CM/663d from Samrecski, Gaza, 19 July 1858; Mishâqa, MS., pp. 343-7; Edwards, p. 168; *Rambles*, pp. 111-12.

⁵ See F.O. 195/458, Wood to Redcliffe, No. 34, Damascus, 10 Oct. 1856; A.E. Damas, iv, from Outrey, No. 58, 1 Aug. 1858; F.O. 78/1233, Finn to Clarendon, No. 28, Jerusalem, 12 Oct. 1858; F.O. 78/1520, Brant to Bulwer, No. 40, encl. in Brant to Russell, No. 17, Damascus, 6 Sept. 1860; Finn, ii. 443; compare *Bihi's Barî*, i. No. 23, 25 Apr. 1860.

⁶ See *Isade M.V.*, No. 17595/5, 17 ZA 1274; F.O. 78/1294, Finn to Clarendon, No. 30, Jerusalem, 30 July 1857; F.O. 78/1389, Skene to Alison, No. 20, encl. in Skene to Malmesbury, No. 33, Aleppo, 7 Aug. 1858; Iskandar ibn Ya'qûb Abkarîus, *The Lebanon in Turmoil* (New Haven, 1920), pp. 26-27; Muhammad Abû Sa'ûd al-Hasbi, *Ḥadithat al-sittin* (MS. No. (4) 4668, Zahiriyâ Library, Damascus).

Muslim neighbours were conscripted).¹ But when it was proclaimed in May 1855 that Christians too were liable to serve in the army, many expressed great dissatisfaction. However, subsequently it turned out that the *reeya* could not be admitted to the army and were instead required to pay an exemption tax—*bedel*; and while in many parts of the Empire this arrangement was generally accepted by the non-Muslim subjects, it was opposed by the Syrian Christians. They regarded the *bedel* as a renewal of the poll-tax which they had already ceased to pay a year or two previously, and alleged that this was at variance with the *Hatî-i Hîmzüyn* and its conception of equality.² In most parts of Syria and Palestine Christians declared their readiness to furnish recruits and refused to pay the *bedel*,³ only in Aleppo did the Christians, under a threat of arrest, consent to pay the tax,⁴ but with the proviso that it should not be levied at that time as there was no conscription among the Muslims.⁵ In other places the *bedel* was collected by force,⁶ while in Damascus the continuing reluctance of the Christians to pay it constituted, as we shall see later, one of the major causes of the 1860 outbreak.

By contrast, the Syrian Jews who did pay the *bedel* almost without objection⁷ were by no means affected during the massacres of 1860 in Damascus. They were similarly untouched both in the course of the Aleppo events in 1850, as already mentioned,⁸ and during the anti-Christian riots at Nablus in 1856, which will be described later. Indeed, in this respect the position of the Jews in Syria and Palestine during the period under discussion was far safer than that of their Christian fellow-subjects; and a brief

¹ See petition by Aleppo notables in *Irade D.*, No. 13268/6, *Gurte M* 1267; see also F.O. 78/836, Rose to Palmerston, No. 47, Brounana, 14 Oct. 1850; compare A.E. Damas, II, No. 6, 5 Dec. 1852.

² See above, p. 195 and below, pp. 232-3.

³ F.O. 78/1220, Misk to Clarendon, No. 14, Damascus, 27 Aug. 1856; F.O. 78/1219, Moore to Clarendon, No. 37, Beirut, 18 Aug. 1856; F.O. 78/1218, Finn to Clarendon, No. 32, Jerusalem, 7 Nov. 1856; A.E. Damas, IV, from Outrey, No. 14, 10 Aug. 1856.

⁴ F.O. 195/416, Barker to Redcliffe, No. 37, Aleppo, 10 Nov. 1856.

⁵ F.O. 78/1452, Skene to Bulwer, No. 11, encl. in Skene to Malmesbury, No. 20, Aleppo, 31 Mar. 1859; *Rambles*, pp. 58-59.

⁶ F.O. 78/1218, Finn to Clarendon, No. 33, Jerusalem, 10 Nov. 1856.

⁷ A.E. Damas, IV, from Outrey, No. 14, 16 Aug. 1856; *ibid.*, V, No. 63, 27 Sept. 1858; F.O. 78/1219, Moore to Clarendon, No. 37, Beirut, 18 Aug. 1856; Mishäqa, MS., pp. 344-7.

⁸ See above, p. 191.

survey of this position is relevant not only to show the significant impact of that era on the Syrian Jews, but to confirm further, by way of comparison, the major causes for Muslim-Christian antagonism.

B. *The position of the Jews*

'The Muslims and Jews do not hate each other . . . but to the Christians the Muslims bear hate.'

(A Jewish traveller in Syria in 1859)¹

The several thousands of Jews, mainly town-dwellers, were perhaps the most depressed community in Syria and Palestine during the pre-reform period. They were frequently subject to a great deal of aggression and oppression by the local authorities and the Muslim population as well as by their Christian neighbours.² It is true that under the Egyptian régime the position of the Jews became noticeably better: they enjoyed greater security, justice, and religious freedom than in the past,³ but at the same time they were far from being equal to their Muslim or Christian fellow-subjects, nor did they enjoy the same measure of safety as the rest. They continued occasionally to be maltreated and persecuted by Muslims, Christians, and some government officials alike;⁴ and in certain occurrences—in Safed and Hebron—a great number of them were massacred and their property sacked by Muslim and Druze rioters as well as by Egyptian soldiers.⁵

It was only during the Tanzimat period that the position of the Jews in Syria and Palestine was remarkably improved and in certain respects it represented a turning point in their history.

¹ A. Ya'ari, *Masat'ot shlah Tzfat* (Jerusalem, 1942), p. 19. See also A.E. Damas, I, from Munton, No. 5, 18 Jan. 1842; *Britis Barris*, No. 32 (1860).

² See A. Y. Brayer in *Zion*, I (5690), No. 1, pp. 5, 168-76, 186; L. A. Mayer in *Zion*, I, No. 4, pp. 5-7; A. Shohat in *Zion* (new series), I (5696), pp. 380-6; Schwärz, *Tzu'ot*, II, 47-48; Schulman, *Ariel*, pp. 72-73; see also Burchardt, p. 317.

³ F.O. 78/283, Campbell's Report: Rustum, *Malfūẓāt*, II, 336, No. 3077; p. 394, No. 3420; III, 123, No. 4583; pp. 294-5, No. 5178; Frumqin, in *Zion*, II, 147; Schulman, *Ariel*, p. 69.

⁴ F.O. 78/368, Young to Palmerston, No. 13, Jerusalem, 25 May 1839, in Hyamson, I, 6-8; F.O. 78/410, Werry to Palmerston, No. 6, Damascus, 22 May 1840.

⁵ M. Abir, 'Tvi'ot Yehudey Tzfat', in *Sefunot*, No. 7 (Jerusalem, 5723), pp. 260-70; Y. Ben-Zvi, 'Me, ora'ot Tzfat', in *Sefunot*, No. 7, pp. 277-80; al-Dibs, VIII, 649; Schulman, op. cit., p. 76; Spyridon, p. 100.

In 1840, following the Damascus 'blood libel', a special Imperial firman was issued by Sultan Abdülmecid upon the request of Sir Moses Montefiore, confirming the rights of the Jews in accordance with the Güllane edict, and guaranteeing their complete security.¹ A similar attitude was expressed in other firmans sent to Syria in 1841, immediately after its restoration to the Ottomans; in one order, for example, which dealt with the protection of the Christians, a special reference was made by the Sultan on the need to protect also the Jews.² In the same year the first Jewish *Hakambasi* (Chief Rabbi) was nominated in Jerusalem by an Imperial order and was granted an official position and considerable authority over his community.³

Another firman of 1841 was concerned with the preservation of the status of the Jews in the public administration,⁴ and about the same time, Raphael Farhi, a member of the well-known Jewish family, resumed his senior position as the Banker of the provincial treasury of Damascus.⁵ When this office was subsequently abolished and Farhi was superseded by an official sent from Istanbul,⁶ other members of the Jewish community, both in Damascus and in Aleppo, continued to hold (alongside Christian officials) a considerable number of posts in the new financial administration.⁷ Like their Christian fellow-subjects, the Jews of Syria, notably those living in the commercial centres, were engaged also in the country's foreign trade and were thus prospering economically.⁸

¹ See text in F.O. 78/416; M. Montefiore, *Diaries* (London, 1890), i. 278-9.
² See *Irade H.*, No. 527, 3 CA 1257 (on the facing page); see also *ibid.*, No. 532, 9 CA 1257; F.O. 195/181, Palmerston to Ponsonby, No. 95, 21 Apr. 1841, in Hyamson, i. 40.

³ See *Irade H.*, No. 532, op. cit.; see also firman of Eyvahir B 1257, in Hirschberg, *Riḥlāh*, pp. 95-98; A. Almalih, 'Ha-rishonim le-Zion bi-Yerushalayim', in *Ozar Yehudey Sefarad*, iii, p. 63; compare *Ha-magid*, ii, No. 36, p. 144, 16 Sept. 1858.

⁴ *Maliyeden Midevet*, No. 9061, p. 3, para. 9, dated 1257 (1841).
⁵ F.O. 78/447, Werry to Bidwell, private, Damascus, 21 Aug. 1841; al-Bāshā, p. 242; Paton, p. 39; Taoutel, iii. 23.

⁶ *Ceadet D.*, Mahye, No. 19123, L 1261; F.O. 78/447, op. cit.

⁷ Levton, p. 112b; G. W. Curtis, *The Wanderer in Syria* (London, 1852), p. 303; Paton, p. 39; Wilson, *The Lands*, ii. 333; see also *Irade D.*, No. 10607, 16 R 1265; F.O. 195/207, Werry to Canning, No. 16, Aleppo, 9 Sept. 1843.

⁸ Israel Ben Yosef Binjamin, *Sefer mas'ot ey Israel* (Lyck, 1859), pp. 12 ff.; *Ha-Karnel*, No. 27, 29 Tivet 5621 (1861), p. 212; Lyall, p. 101; Porter, *Damascus*, i. 147; Wilson, op. cit., ii. 333-4, 364; Ya'ari, *Tzfat*, pp. 13-19. See also F.O. 78/622, Wood to Canning, No. 13, encl. in Wood to Aberdeen, No. 21, Damascus, 24 June 1845.

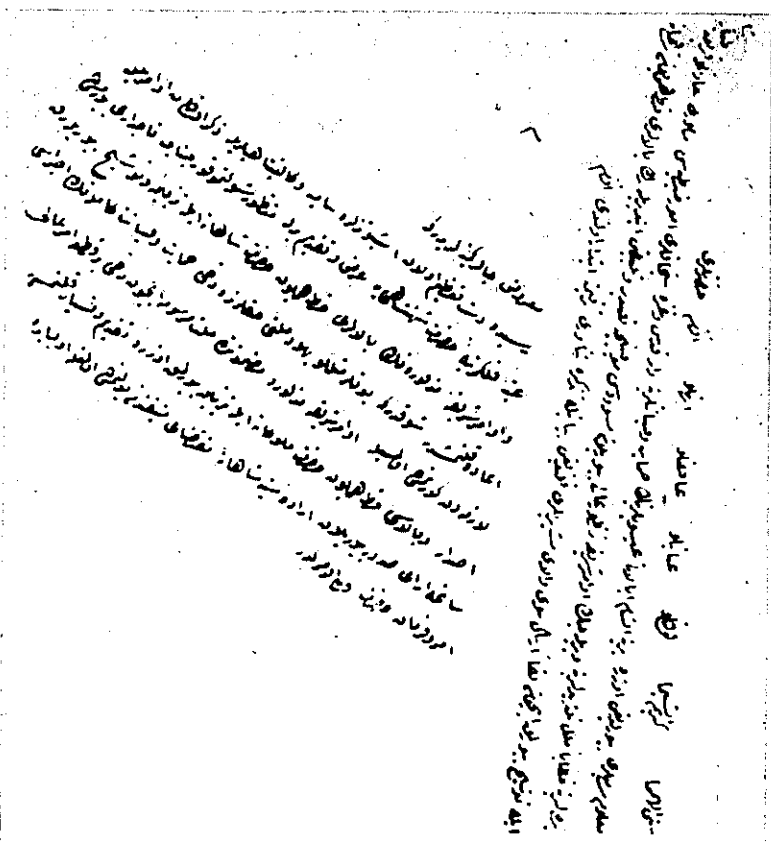


Fig. 3. An Imperial firman on the need to protect the Jews as well as the Christians

On the other hand, however, as already described, the Jews together with the Christians continued to be unequal to the Muslims before the law and in the public institutions. In addition, they were still occasionally insulted and attacked, sometimes to death, by their Muslim neighbours as well as by soldiers and policemen.¹ Such cases occurred particularly in Palestinian towns, where the Jews were largely foreign subjects; in these places they continued to be, especially in the 1840s, the major target for oppression by local Muslim notables and some government officials.²

Yet in comparison with the past, the situation of the Jews in Palestine was markedly better, and as time went on, it improved further. Reports of the 1850s indicate, for example, that 'Jews do obtain more redress from the local governors in Palestine', and that 'the oppression of the Turkish governors has considerably... almost... completely ceased'.³

The growing security of the Jews in Palestine, which was largely due to the protection granted by the European consuls, particularly the English,⁴ helped to attract to Palestine a considerable number of Jewish immigrants from Europe, who came and settled mainly in Jerusalem, Hebron, Safed, and Tiberias.⁵ Thus, for example, the Jewish population of Jerusalem, which in 1839 had amounted to some 5,000, had almost doubled by the late 1850s to

¹ F.O. 195/194, Rose to Aberdeen, No. 55, encl. in Rose to Canning, No. 54, Beirut, 7 Aug. 1842; F.O. 78/837, Calvert to Canning, No. 20, encl. in Calvert to Palmerston, No. 19, Damascus, 29 Aug. 1850; F.O. 78/1538, Skene to Bulwer, No. 4, encl. in Skene to Russell, No. 16, Aleppo, 14 Apr. 1860; A.E. Jerusalem, i, from Philibert, No. 44, 28 Jan. 1844.

² F.O. 78/498, Wood to Bidwell, No. 3, Damascus, 3 Jan. 1842; F.O. 78/839, Finn to Palmerston, No. 20, Jerusalem, 27 Sept. 1850; Binyamin, pp. 8-9; Finn, ii, 59 ff.; M. Kayser, *Sefer sha'arey Yerushalayim* (Lemberg, 1866), p. 17; Wortabet, i, 110.

³ See respectively, F.O. 78/874, Finn to Canning, No. 10, encl. in Finn to Palmerston, No. 6, Jerusalem, 24 July 1851; *Jewish Intelligence*, xxii, No. 260, cited in F.O. 78/1217, Finn to Clarendon, No. 1, Jerusalem, 7 Jan. 1856; see also F.O. 78/2068, Moore to Palmerston, No. 45, Beirut, 1 Dec. 1849 in Hyamson, i, 156; Jessup, i, 269; Raysher, pp. 18, 28; G. Williams, *The Holy City* (London, 1845), p. 432.

⁴ F.O. 78/836, Rose to Palmerston, No. 54, Beirut, 1 Dec. 1850; F.O. 78/963, Finn to Clarendon, No. 33, Jerusalem, 28 Dec. 1859; see also undated letter from the Russian Jews in Tiberias to Sir M. Montefiore, in Montefiore Papers, Ben-Zvi Institute, Jerusalem.

⁵ F.O. 78/963, Finn to Clarendon, No. 33, Jerusalem, 28 Dec. 1853; F.O. 78/1454, Finn to Malmesbury, No. 1, Jerusalem, 1 Jan. 1859; F.O. 78/1521, Finn to Russell, No. 1, Jerusalem, 4 Jan. 1860; see also Braver in *Zion*, v (1939-40), p. 169; Vineb, in *Zion*, iii (1938), p. 76.

become half of the total population in the city.¹ They purchased land in and round Jerusalem,² and, with the help of Moses Montefiore, gradually learned 'to work for their own living instead of depending solely for subsistence upon the alms from Europe'.³

At the same time the position of the Jews in Syria, who were mainly Ottoman subjects, was even more secure and politically advanced; it was in fact better than ever before under Ottoman rule and safer than that of the local Christians.⁴ This was partly due to foreign protection, but mainly it was because the Jews were now treated with greater respect both by the authorities and by the Muslim leaders. Indeed, a great number of Turkish Pashas would endeavour to protect their Jewish inhabitants against both Muslim ill-treatment and Christian vexation.⁵ Muslim notables, among them members of the *meclis*, would likewise support Jews in their disputes with Christians,⁶ and in at least one instance—the case of inheritance by a minor—the Jewish community enjoyed, as already mentioned, a more favoured status in the *mih-keme* than the Christian communities.⁷

This preferential attitude of Muslims towards Jews, although

¹ See and compare, Great Britain, *A Handbook of Syria (including Palestine)*, prepared by the Admiralty (1913?) p. 184; A.E. Jerusalem, ii, from Jorjelle, No. 34, 1 July 1847; Finn, i, 101-2; F.O. 78/1388, Finn to Clarendon, No. 1, Jerusalem, 1 Jan. 1858; A. M. Hyamson, *Palestine* (London, 1917), ii, 331.

² See, for example, document of 24 R 1238 in the Archives of the Sephardi community in Jerusalem, Ben-Zvi Institute, Jerusalem; D. Yelin, *Zikronot le-van Yerushalayim* (Jerusalem, 5684), pp. 52, 57; F.O. 195/292, Finn to Canning, No. 11, Jerusalem, 14 Aug. 1850.

³ F.O. 78/1454, Finn to Malmesbury, No. 1, Jerusalem, 1 Jan. 1859; see also F.O. 78/874, Finn to Canning, No. 20, encl. in Finn to Palmerston, No. 9, Jerusalem, 5 Dec. 1851; Finn, ii, 321 ff., 408-9.

⁴ See, for example, F.O. 78/448, Werry to Palmerston, No. 16, Aleppo, 28 July 1841; Binjamin, pp. 12-17; Lyall, p. 101; Neale, ii, 105; Porter, *Damascus*, i, 147; Yâ'ari, *Shlah Tzfat*, pp. 13 ff.

⁵ F.O. 195/207, Werry to Canning, No. 19, Aleppo, 10 Apr. 1844; F.O. 78/714, Timoni to Wellesey, No. 11, encl. in Timoni to Palmerston, No. 9, Damascus, 31 May 1847; F.O. 78/1219, Moore to Clarendon, No. 33, Beirut, 14 July 1856; A.E. Jerusalem, i, from Philibert, No. 44, 20 Jan. 1844; A.E. Damas, iii, No. 24, 27 May 1855; see also Mishāqā, MS., pp. 356-7.

⁶ See, for example, F.O. 78/658, Rose to Aberdeen, No. 25, Beirut, 7 June 1846; F.O. 78/1217, Finn to Moore, No. 42, encl. in Finn to Clarendon, Jerusalem, 7 July 1856; F.O. 78/1220, Misk to Clarendon, No. 17, Damascus, 29 Oct. 1856; Material from the Collection of Me'ir Nahmad, Aleppo, in Ben-Zvi Institute, Jerusalem; compare *Hā-Karnel*, i, No. 29, p. 227, 14 Shvat 5621 (1861).

⁷ F.O. 78/1219, Moore to Redcliffe, No. 49, encl. in Moore to Clarendon, No. 35, Beirut, 14 July 1856; see above, p. 195-6.

not completely new in Islamic and Ottoman history,¹ became now more conspicuous in the light of the equality officially granted to the non-Muslim subjects under the Tanzimat reforms. Unlike the Christians, the Jews of Syria usually refrained from demonstrating their new liberties, and from behaving insolently towards Muslims; they continued to carry on their life more as a second-class minority than as an equal community. Related to this and more significant was the fact that the local Jews were a small religious group, who possessed no political aims and had 'an interest in the present and future welfare of the country'.²

By contrast, the Syrian Christians, who formed a large part of the local population,³ firmly claimed to be equal to their Muslim fellow-subjects; and in view of their close links with the European Powers, they were regarded as a political danger by both the Muslim population and the Turkish authorities.

¹ See G. E. Von Grunebaum, *Medieval Islam* (Chicago, 1946), pp. 180-1; *Turkey*, in *Jewish Encyclopedia*.

² F.O. 78/444, Young to Ponsonby, No. 11, Jerusalem, 11 June 1841; see also Almalih, op. cit., p. 63; Finn, i, 408; L. A. Frankel, *Nach Jerusalem*, i, 366, cited in Braver, *Zion*, x-xii (1945-7), p. 99; Madden, ii, 28.

³ There are no official figures on the numerical division of the Syrian population in the mid-nineteenth century. According to estimates by contemporary European observers, the population of Syria, Lebanon, and Palestine was composed of over a million Muslims (mostly Arabs), about half a million Christians (including some 200,000 Maronites, mainly in Mount Lebanon), and some 25,000 Jews. See and compare Edwards, pp. 12-13; Farley, *The Massacres*, p. 173; Thomson, pp. 166-7. See also R. F. Burton and C. F. Tyrwhitt Drake, *Unexplored Syria* (London, 1872), pp. 101 ff.; *Haar al-lithām*, pp. 6-8.

XVI

EUROPEAN ACTIVITIES AND MUSLIM-CHRISTIAN RELATIONS

'... the European powers are hostile to the Turkish authority in Syria and ... in union with the Christians they wish to overturn it.'

(A common belief of Syrian Muslims)¹

THE association of local Christians with European powers was not completely new among the Muslim population of Syria and Palestine. For some centuries there had been certain religious and cultural connexions between Syrian Christians and Catholic centres in Europe,² as well as commercial ties between the Syrian *raya* and European countries.³ During the eighteenth century these relations expanded and grew closer and, coinciding with the strengthening of Christian Europe and the decline of the Ottoman power, they produced feelings of suspicion among Syrian Muslims.⁴ In 1799 these feelings were intensified by the Napoleonic invasion of Palestine which threatened the integrity of Syria and the Empire; so strong had this mistrust become that in Damascus a Muslim mob rioted against the Christians,⁵ and more than two decades later, when the Greek revolt broke out, Christians were attacked by Muslims in many parts of Syria and Palestine.⁶

Yet these anti-Christian outbursts were only sporadic and rather limited and did not indicate an essential change in the Muslim traditional attitude: the Christians, like the Jews, were still second-

class citizens and on the whole were treated by the dominant Muslims with contempt rather than hostility. Similarly, European activities in Syria and Palestine, as well as their connexions with local Christian communities, were as yet comparatively limited, and being mainly restricted to the coastal areas, had hardly any political or military implications.

A decisive shift in this complexity of factors and relations took place during the era of reform, starting in the 1830s under the Egyptian régime,¹ and developing during the first two decades of the Tanzimat. In the course of this period, European religious and commercial activities increased greatly and spread into the Syrian hinterland, and while further strengthening the position of the Christian communities, caused great anger and anxiety among the Muslim population. As matters stood, the opening of taverns and the performance of dances, festivities and the like, by foreigners, deeply hurt the feelings of the Muslims;² the growing missionary activities likewise produced great dissatisfaction among orthodox Muslims.³ Another major grievance expressed by the local Muslims was 'that the Europeans not only carried away their money, but had superseded the native industry, by which they had ruined and reduced to poverty the subjects of the Sultan'.⁴

Above all it was the expanding foreign political activities through a network of newly established consulates all over the country that gave the greatest anxiety to both the Muslim population and the Turkish authorities. This activity, which was connected with various internal matters, especially among the Christian subjects, provided quite good grounds for the belief that Christian Europe was aiming at occupying Syria and Palestine with the aid of the local Christians.

¹ See above, p. 17. On the pro-European policy of Muhammad 'Alī, see Rustum, *Malfūzāt*, ii, 298, No. 2868. See also Polk, pp. 136-7.

² See Hourani, *Arabic Thought*, pp. 55-59.

³ Gibb and Bowen, i, 308-10; Shannir, *The 'Aqm*, p. 247.

⁴ Compare Gibb and Bowen, ii, 258; Polk, p. 136.

⁵ *Mukhāṭṭab al-Dimashqī, Ta'rikh harāṭih al-Shām wa-Lubnān* (Beirut, 1912), p. 9; *Kitāb al-ahzān fi ta'rikh al-Shām* (MS., No. 956, 9, A.U.B.), pp. 48-50; see also Baedeker, p. 350.

⁶ See F.O. 78/495, Rose to Canning, No. 36, Beirut, 20 May 1842; Baedeker, p. 350; Barker, ii, 19-21; Mishāqa, MS., pp. 170-1; Spyridon, pp. 18-29; Bodman, p. 138. Compare Heyd, *Ulemā'*, p. 91.

¹ See above, p. 17. On the pro-European policy of Muhammad 'Alī, see Rustum, *Malfūzāt*, ii, 298, No. 2868. See also Polk, pp. 136-7.

² See F.O. 78/538, Wood to Aberdeen, No. 17, Damascus, 25 May 1843; Letter from the *kaymakam* of Aleppo to Consul Werry of 14 N 1258 in F.O. 195/207; F.O. 78/959, Wood to Russell, No. 9, Damascus, 7 Feb. 1853; F.O. 78/1454, Finn to Malmesbury, No. 13, Jerusalem, 23 May 1859; A.E. Darnas, ii, 3 Feb. 1853.

³ See *Irāde D.*, No. 2670/18, 19 Z 1257; *ibid.*, No. 14609, 2 Z 1267; A.E. Alep, ii, from de Lesseps, No. 1, 30 May 1851; compare Davison, *Reform*, pp. 74-75; Tibawi, p. 166.

⁴ F.O. 78/701, Wood to Canning, No. 29, encl. in Wood to Palmerston, No. 30, Damascus, 25 Nov. 1848; see also Kibrizli, pp. 83-84.

A. *Foreign activities and intervention*

'Tous les consuls sont des États dans l'État, des pierres d'achoppement.'¹

During the 1840s and the 1850s there was virtually no area of government administration, from finance and justice to affairs of the *reeya* and obvious political issues, in which the European consuls did not interfere.² The English took the leading role in this practice, being from the beginning convinced that 'without the aid of the British forces the Turks could not have regained possession of Syria... (and) without the continued aid of the British government... the Turks cannot govern Syria'.³ This was especially the attitude of Consul Wood, who for several years behaved almost as if he were the Governor-General of Syria, as he himself stated: 'British influence of course was not only paramount but the country may be said to have been administered by us;... nearly all the Governors and public officers owed their nomination to me.... I nominated also to the various offices under them my own people to act as checks upon them.'⁴ Wood was, admittedly, empowered by the Ottomans to supervise the affairs in the country in the first year after the restoration of Ottoman rule in Syria,⁵ but he was certainly not authorized by the *Porte* to act as he and his colleagues did during the early 1840s and later on. Nor was Consul Wood or any other British consul ordered by their own government to do so: a Foreign Office dispatch sent to Ponsoby, the Ambassador in Constantinople, regarding the future of Syria after its restoration stated: 'Her Majesty's Government are not sufficiently conversant with the internal arrangements of Turkish Administration to be able to say what specified measures

would be best adopted for this purpose.'⁶ And in its instructions to Colonel Rose on his appointment as Consul-General of Syria in 1841, the Foreign Office clearly stressed: 'You will be careful to abstain from meddling interference.'⁷ But in spite of these instructions, Consul Wood was repeatedly accused by the Turkish authorities of 'interference and meddling'.⁸

It is true that a considerable part of these English activities in the Syrian provinces aimed at seeing that the reforms of the *hat* of Gülhane (in the promulgation of which the British had had a major share) were carried out; as Consul Wood pointed out: 'Her Majesty's consulate has been incessantly struggling for years with Her officers, and in Her interest for the maintenance and execution as far as its sphere of action will permit, of the provisions of the Tanzimat.'⁹ Indeed, in certain instances the intervention of the English and French consuls, and sometimes even their mere presence in the province, helped to control abuses and to hasten the introduction of the reforms; in some cases their advice and help, which was occasionally sought by the Pashas, proved useful.¹⁰ But on the other hand, foreign interference frequently made the task of the Ottoman authorities in Syria more difficult.

Firstly, many Turkish Pashas in the Syrian provinces, as well as in the *Porte*, were sceptical about the sincerity of British support for the Tanzimat, and were suspicious of British aims in the area. One idea common in Ottoman high circles was that England had been supporting the Ottomans against Muhammad 'Ali and the Russians only because this was compatible with her own interests; the Ottoman provinces, including those of Syria, were important to the British from the point of view of their position in India and their commercial interests in the area.¹¹ Secondly, and more important, the consuls' intervention contributed on many occasions to the damaging of Ottoman authority in the provinces, as

¹ Edwards, p. 77; compare Wortabet, i, 347.

² See *Irade D.*, No. 2058/6, 3 CA 1257; *Irade H.*, No. 3923, 4 ZA 1267; F.O. 78/447, Wood to Bidwell, No. 8, Damascus, 21 Dec. 1841; F.O. 78/81, Young to Aberdeen, No. 18, Jerusalem, 29 June 1844; F.O. 78/1538, Skene to Bulwer, No. 5, encl. in Skene to Russell, No. 17, Aleppo, 19 Apr. 1860; Porter, *Damascus*, i, 135; Taoutel, iii, 153, 169.

³ F.O. 78/444, Young to Palmerston, No. 5, Jaffa, 25 Jan. 1841.

⁴ F.O. 78/499, Wood to Ponsoby, Beirut, 17 Feb. 1841.

⁵ Compare F.O. 78/499, Plan proposé à la Sublime Porte pour le gouvernement de la Syrie, encl. in Wood to Ponsoby, Beirut, 17 Feb. 1841; see also F.O. 78/447, Wood to Aberdeen, No. 42, Damascus, 4 Dec. 1841; al-Qasatli, p. 90; Mishaqa, *Muntahabāt*, p. 152.

¹ F.O. 78/391, F.O. to Ponsoby, No. 266, 12 Dec. 1840.

² F.O. 78/454, F.O. to Rose, No. 6, 2 Nov. 1841.

³ F.O. 78/535, Rose to Wood, encl. No. 1 in Rose to Aberdeen, No. 2, Beirut, 7 Jan. 1843; *Irade D.*, No. 2053/6, 3 CA 1257.

⁴ F.O. 78/801, Wood to Canning, No. 20, encl. in Wood to Palmerston, No. 23, Damascus, 25 Sept. 1849; see also F.O. 78/391, F.O. to Ponsoby, No. 92, 12 Apr. 1841 in Temperley, p. 186.

⁵ Farley, *Syria*, p. 300; Finn, i, 193, 340-2; ii, 21, 145-6; compare Oliphant, p. 337; Yeltn, p. 33.

⁶ Ungüthart Papers, ii, MSS. C1 (6), 'Conversation with Namic Pasha on offering military aid to Turkey, 1854'; see also Karal, v, 215.

Mr. Bulwer, the British Ambassador to Constantinople, frankly wrote in 1859:

Many of the foreign consuls including our own have been in the habit of assuming the functions of government, of dictating to the Pashas arbitrarily the line of conduct to be pursued in internal matters, of fostering partisans; . . . (all of which) has gone towards annihilating the power of the provincial Governors, of introducing a restless spirit of dissatisfaction amongst the native population.¹

Thus, for example, French and English consuls, seeking to establish their influence in the country, would occasionally support rival mountain groups or other semi-autonomous elements. The principal scene of this struggle was, of course, Mount Lebanon, where the French supported their traditional allies, the Maronites, while the English sided with the Druzes.² In addition, the English and French consuls would, as already indicated, periodically back the rival families of Tuqān and 'Abd al-Hādī in Jabal Nablus and those of al-Lahmān and Abū-Ghūsh in the Jerusalem mountains.³ Such support was occasionally extended also to the Shihābī Amir of Ḥaṣḥayā Sa'd al-Dīn or to certain Ḥarfūsh Amirs of Ba'albek in their relations with the Turkish authorities.⁴ Even local elements such as the Druzes of Houran and the Bedouin chief 'Aqīl aḡā of northern Palestine, who were notorious for their disobedience, were associated in one way or another with the British and French consuls respectively.⁵ It is true that the consuls would from time to time use their contacts and influence with the various territorial groups in order to settle anti-government uprisings or local armed disputes.⁶ But it is equally true that these

¹ F.O. 78/1637, Bulwer to Russell, Constantinople, 26 July 1859.

² *Trade D.*, No. 2058, 25 CA 1257; F.O. 78/500, Moore to Aberdeen, No. 33, Beirut, 4 Apr. 1842; Abū-Shaqā', pp. 45-46; Karal, v. 214-17; Khazin, i. 66-67, 73; Ubicini, i. 348.

³ See, for example, *Trade D.*, No. 14609, 2 Z 1267; F.O. 78/581, Young to Canning, No. 25, Jerusalem, 3 Aug. 1844; A.E. Jerusalem, i. from Lantivy, No. 56, 22 Apr. 1844; Finn, i. 314; ii. 400, 426, 431; al-Nūm, p. 269; see also above, pp. 112, 116.

⁴ F.O. 78/498, Wood to Aberdeen, No. 6, Damascus, 3 Jan. 1842; F.O. 78/959, Wood to Clarendon, No. 23, Damascus, 11 May 1853; A.E. Damas, ii, from Segur, No. 21, 13 Aug. 1851; A.E. Damas, iii, from de Barrère, No. 15, 12 Aug. 1854.

⁵ See above, pp. 127, 139.

⁶ See, for example, F.O. 78/1028, Wood to Clarendon, No. 10, Damascus, 24 Feb. 1854; F.O. 78/1033, Werry to Redcliffe, No. 17, encl. in Werry to Clarendon, No. 10, Aleppo, 13 June 1854; Finn, i. 320-3; ii. 195, 286; Lyde, p. 216; see also above, pp. 127-8.

local warring elements drew much encouragement in their efforts to remain autonomous, from the links they maintained and the support they occasionally received from the foreign emissaries.

Foreign agents of various European powers were, furthermore, reported to have been directly engaged in subversive activities against the Turkish government.¹ Among those were also English military officers such as Major Churchill, whose activities were described by the Turkish authorities as aiming at 'agitating the provinces'.² French agents were apparently no less active: according to British consular reports they were periodically engaged in distributing arms among certain sections of the population and inciting them to rise against the government.³ Such reports, which obviously indicated the contest for influence between the British and the French, became particularly accusatory after the Crimean War at the time when France was replacing England as the leading foreign power in the Syrian provinces.⁴ Consul Moore reported, thus, in 1858: 'The French have succeeded in establishing a system of terror all over Syria by means of which they have become the virtual rulers of the country.'⁵

B. *European protection of the Christian communities*

'... Foreign Embassies have no title to interfere in matters concerning rayas and . . . the communities must declare whether they are Ottoman or foreign subjects.'

(A statement by the *meclis* of Damascus)⁶

Foreign intervention and rivalry were, of course, much more vigorous and more evident with regard to the local non-Muslims

¹ See F.O. 78/959, Wood to Clarendon, No. 46, Damascus, 26 Aug. 1853; F.O. 78/1383, Finn to Mahnesbury, No. 6, Jerusalem, 13 Apr. 1858; A.E. Damas, iii, from de Barrère, No. 1, 15 July 1853; *Trade D.*, No. 2058, 25 CA 1257; *ibid.*, No. 14609, 2 Z 1267; Finn, ii. 304, 306, 313-14.

² *Trade H.*, No. 2580, 6 N 1257; compare F.O. 78/457, Rose to Aberdeen, No. 108, Beirut, 7 Oct. 1841.

³ F.O. 78/500, Moore to Canning, Beirut, 4 Apr. 1842; F.O. 78/959, Wood to Russell, No. 10, Damascus, 10 Feb. 1853.

⁴ F.O. 78/1217, Finn to Clarendon, No. 15, Jerusalem, 14 Mar. 1856; F.O. 78/1219, Moore to Clarendon, No. 6, Beirut, 29 Dec. 1856; F.O. 78/1220, Wood to Redcliffe, No. 1, encl. in Wood to Clarendon, No. 2, Damascus, 18 Jan. 1856. On the English-French rivalry in Istanbul, see Cevdet, *Tezakir*, i. 26-27; Engelhardt, i. 49-50; ii. 316 ff.

⁵ F.O. 78/1385, confidential memo. encl. in Moore to Clarendon, No. 8, Beirut, 19 Feb. 1858.

⁶ F.O. 78/1298, Mist to Clarendon, No. 14, Damascus, 27 Sept. 1857.

and especially the Christian communities. In this area the chief contestants were France and Russia. The former continued to extend its traditional protection and support to the Maronites, Melkites, and Latins,¹ while the latter did the same thing with respect to the Greek Orthodox and Armenian communities, particularly after the Treaty of Hünkâr Iskelesi of 1833.² Both powers backed their respective protected communities in their endless rivalry and disputes, especially over the Holy Places in Palestine; this policy eventually, it may be said, led to the involvement of the Ottomans in the Crimean War.³

Apart from Russia and France other European powers were also engaged in the protection of the *reyva*. British and Prussian protection was granted to the small Protestant community, which was formed in Syria and Palestine in the late 1830s-early 1840s, and which was officially recognized as a *millet* in 1850.⁴ English protection was also extended to a considerable number of Jews, particularly non-Ottoman subjects;⁵ other Jews were under Russian, Prussian, Austrian, and French protection.⁶

¹ See, for example, F.O. 78/444, Young to Palmerston, No. 15, Jerusalem, 7 Apr. 1841; F.O. 78/964, Kayat to Clarendon, separate, Jaffa, 1 May 1853; Finn, i, 21 ff., 51 ff., 72 ff.; for more information on the history of French protection over the Catholics, see B. Homay, *Les Capitulations et la Protection des Chrétiens au Proche-Orient* (Paris, 1956).

² For details on Russian protection over the Orthodox community in Syria and Palestine, see F.O. 195/226, Wood to Canning, No. 19, Damascus, 29 July 1844; Bazili, ii, 2-3, 21-22; *Byzian Briefs*, i, No. 20, 13 Mar. 1860; for a study on the Russian activities in Syria and Palestine during that period see D. Hopwood, *Russian Activities in Syria in the Nineteenth Century*, D.Phil. Thesis (Oxford, 1964). See also T. G. Stavrou, 'Russian Interest in the Levant 1843-1848', *M.E.J.*, No. 17 (1963), pp. 91-103. On Russian protection over the Armenian community see, for example, *Trade H.*, No. 1335, 4 RA 1261. On the treaty of Hünkâr Iskelesi, see P. E. Mosley, *Russian Diplomacy and the Opening of the Eastern Question in 1838-1839* (Harvard, 1934).

³ See F.O. 78/444, Young to Palmerston, No. 15, Jerusalem, 7 Apr. 1841; F.O. 195/226, Wood to Canning, No. 19, Damascus, 29 July 1844; Finn, i, 21 ff. On the rivalry over the Holy Places and its consequences, see also Temperley, Ch. XI.

⁴ F.O. 78/872, Wood to Canning, encl. No. 2 in Wood to Palmerston, No. 18, Damascus, 29 May 1851; Finn, i, 148, 156 ff.; Porter, *Damascus*, i, 145; Robinson, p. 161.

⁵ F.O. 78/391, F.O. to Ponsonby, No. 248, London, 24 Nov. 1840; F.O. 78/836, Rose to Palmerston, No. 54, Beirut, 1 Dec. 1850; F.O. 78/713, Malmesbury to Finn, No. 5, London, 8 Nov. 1852.

⁶ See, for example, Letter from Jews in Thiberias under Russian protection, n.d. (1839?) in *Montefiore Papers*, Ben-Zvi Institute; F.O. 78/963, Finn to Clarendon, No. 33, Jerusalem, 28 Dec. 1853; Hopwood, p. 94; Hyamson, *Palestine*, pp. 52-53; Foujade, pp. 213-14; Temperley, pp. 443-4; Yellin, p. 9.

European consuls in the country, notably the English and French, would protect Christians and Jews alike, both Ottoman subjects and aliens, against persecution of all kinds—religious, economic, and political; and would similarly help them to achieve various benefits.¹ But in so doing the consuls frequently overstepped the bounds of discretion, while undermining government authority among the Christians and aggravating the relations between Christians and Muslims. Thus great embarrassment and financial loss were caused to the Turkish government by European consulates which misused their capitulatory privileges and enlisted a large number of Ottoman subjects as their protégés, exempting them from government jurisdiction and certain taxes.² Moreover, the Powers not only used their influence in the *Porte* to cause the dismissal of alleged anti-Christian Pashas in Syria, but they would occasionally also threaten the Turkish authorities and the Muslim population with military occupation were the Christian subjects to be maltreated. After the Aleppo riots of 1850, Palmerston wrote: 'If the Christian subjects of the Sultan are to be liable to become the victims of such abominable crimes, Christian Europe will come to the conclusion that the existence of the Ottoman Empire is an evil and that its overthrow would be conducive to the general interest of the human race.'³ The French consul in Damascus expressed a similar idea in public while warning the local Muslims after a quarrel between a Frenchman and a Muslim: 'Is it necessary for them to witness a French army on the heights of Salhiyé to make them recollect that the French took Algiers and furnished it for a mere stroke of a fan?'⁴ Nor were the European powers satisfied with purely verbal warnings: French and British warships would often patrol

¹ See, for example, F.O. 78/800, Moore to Palmerston, No. 30, Beirut, 31 Aug. 1849; A.E. Damas, iii, from de Barthele, No. 24, 27 May 1855; F.O. 78/1388, Brant to Malmesbury, No. 10, Aleppo, 10 June 1852; Wortabet, i, 351.

² F.O. 78/910, Werry to Canning, No. 16, encl. in Werry to Malmesbury, No. 10, Aleppo, 10 June 1852; F.O. 78/1538, White to Skene, Antioch, 18 Apr., encl. in Skene to Russell, No. 18, Aleppo, 30 Apr. 1860; Edwards, pp. 78-81; Wortabet, i, 345-50; compare Ubicini, i, 187; White, i, 133.

³ F.O. 78/816, Palmerston to Canning, No. 321, 18 Dec. 1850 in Temperley, p. 198.

⁴ Letter from the French consul to the Pasha at Damascus, encl. in F.O. 78/958, Wood to Russell, No. 10, Damascus, 10 Feb. 1853 ('Salhiyé'—a quarter in Damascus); see also F.O. 78/1120, Finn to Clarendon, No. 13, Jerusalem, 28 May 1855.

along the Syrian coast or call on coastal towns, particularly at times of anti-Christian tension.¹

The outbreak of the Crimean War served as a decisive proof that the Christian threat to the Islamic state was indeed real; and the fact that England and France were on the side of the Turks did not, on the whole, undermine this belief. The termination of the Crimean War saw, furthermore, the intensification of Western pressure; the *Hatt-ı Hümayun* of 1856, which was issued after the war, was itself in fact a product of European intervention in favour of the Ottoman Christians.²

This foreign intervention on behalf of the *raya* was so efficient—sometimes it overstressed the latter's rights and overfulfilled even their expectations—that they would frequently refer their grievances and other matters to the consuls rather than to the Turkish authorities.³ It is true that the Christians could not feel great confidence in a government which did not protect them against the Muslims' aggression; they were, indeed, unable to forget such events as the 1850 riots in Aleppo.⁴ But at the same time, various sections of this population did not show any readiness to integrate into a new Ottoman society, and from the beginning manifested a desire to be under the rule of European powers. In 1841, for example, a circular was issued by Syrian Christians (apparently with missionaries' inspiration) requesting Christian Europe to endeavour to bring Palestine under Christian rule.⁵ The Greek Orthodox openly demonstrated from time to time their inclination towards Russia,⁶ while the Maronites were allegedly

in a secret alliance with France.¹ And according to a British source, there were also rumours in 1855 of a plan that France should occupy Palestine, this apparently being suggested by the Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem.²

In view of all these factors—the foreign intervention and threats, and the Christians' open intentions—it is not surprising that the common belief among the Syrian Muslim population and a large portion of the Ottoman administration, was that 'the European powers are hostile to the Turkish authority in Syria and (that) in union with the Christians they wish to upset it' and turn the country into a Christian state.³ According to this belief, all foreign residents and visitors were spies,⁴ and the local Christians were collaborators and informers. In Damascus, for instance, Christian and Jewish deputies were refused admission to the *medris* on the grounds they they would pass its secrets to the foreign consuls.⁵

With these suspicions growing daily stronger, both Turkish officials and Arab Muslims tried wherever possible to check the foreign consuls or diminish the privileges of the Europeans and the Christian protégés.⁶ Some of these restrictions were indeed imposed by orders from the *Porte*: imperial orders sent to Syria abolished, for instance, certain tax concessions for foreign subjects and local protégés,⁷ and prohibited the sale of land to foreigners;⁸ this prohibition continued in fact to be enforced in

¹ F.O. 78/761, Wood to Palmerston, No. 14, Damascus, 8 Apr. 1848; compare *Hay al-itham*, pp. 107-8.

² F.O. 78/1120, Finn to Clarendon, No. 13, Jerusalem, 28 May 1855.

³ See motto at the beginning of this chapter; see also F.O. 78/713, Rose to Palmerston, No. 28, Beirut, 1 June 1847; F.O. 195/292, Finn to Canning, No. 11, Jerusalem, 14 Aug. 1850; A.E. Alep, 1, from Guys, No. 62, 1 July 1841; A.E. Damas, iv, from Outrey, No. 11, 23 May 1856; CM/603d, from Sannezi, No. 514, Jerusalem, 1860; compare MacFarlane, ii. 678.

⁴ F.O. 78/803, Finn to Palmerston, No. 51, Jerusalem, 1 Oct. 1849; Doughty, ii. 374; Velde, i. 423-4.

⁵ F.O. 78/801, Wood to Canning, No. 5, encl. in Wood to Palmerston, No. 4, Damascus, 16 Feb. 1849.

⁶ See, for example, F.O. 195/171, Rose to Ponsonby, No. 27, Beirut, 3 June 1841; F.O. 78/1118, Wood to Redcliffe, Confidential, No. 33, encl. in Wood to Clarendon, No. 35, Damascus, 18 Aug. 1855.

⁷ See, for example, F.O. 78/498, Wood to Bidwell, No. 14, Damascus, 27 Jan. 1842; F.O. 78/801, Wood to Palmerston, No. 6, Damascus, 7 Mar. 1849; Tautel, iii. 112, 115.

⁸ *Cevdet D.*, No. 3430, 25 S 1259; Jaffa *Sifill*, No. 13, 6 Z 1259; see also F.O. 78/839, Finn to Palmerston, No. 18, Jerusalem, 24 Sept. 1850; Urquhart papers, i, c (10) (4), 23 Jan. 1850.

¹ F.O. 195/194, Rose to Canning, No. 55, Beirut, 30 Aug. 1842; F.O. 78/962, Finn to Redcliffe, No. 44, encl. in Finn to Clarendon, No. 30, Jerusalem, 7 Dec. 1853; F.O. 78/1219, Moore to Redcliffe, No. 67, encl. in Moore to Clarendon, No. 59, Beirut, 8 Dec. 1856; A.E. Damas, v, from Outrey, 27 Apr. 1858; see also *Alhawl*, MS., p. 29; Finn, i. 303.

² See text of the *hât*, Cf. Engelhardt, ii. 319-20; Mandin, p. 16; *Rambles*, p. 49. See also *Alhawl*, MS., p. 29.

³ A.E. Jerusalem, v, No. 8, 2 Sept. 1857; F.O. 78/1383, Finn to Clarendon, No. 15, Jerusalem, 22 July 1858; Hopwood, pp. 123-4; see also F.O. 78/964, Kayat to Clarendon, separate, Jaffa, 1 Mar. 1853; Khazin, i. 114; cf. al-Hasbi.

⁴ See and compare F.O. 78/1452, Skene to Bulwer, separate, encl. in Skene to Malmesbury, No. 42, Aleppo, 30 June 1850; F.O. 78/495, Rose to Canning, No. 36, Beirut, 29 May 1842; Wortabet, ii. 89-91.

⁵ *Trade D.*, No. 462, dated 1257 (1841); 'Circular of a project for the erection of Palestine into an independent state' in CM/605, Schlen's Report (see appendix); see also Khazin, i. 114-15.

⁶ See above, p. 216, n. 2; compare Poujade, p. 230.

the Syrian provinces even after it was officially lifted by the 1856 *hat*.¹

The years following the *hat* were indeed marked with a growing tendency on the part of the Ottoman authorities to check the consuls' activities and interference. Apparently to accomplish these aims the *Porte* nominated at the end of 1858 a certain Sadk *efendi* of the *Tercime Odası* (translation office) in Istanbul as *politika memuri* (political officer) in Damascus, with orders to deal with the foreign consuls in the country.² Consul Brant reported at the same time from Damascus that 'the governors of provinces have secret orders to destroy the influence of European consuls',³ while Consul Finn quoted the Pasha of Jerusalem as saying that: 'I will teach the English that they are not to treat this country as if it were India.'⁴ This tendency which was accompanied by an anti-Christian attitude on the part of many Turkish Pashas can be summed up with the following statement by Consul-General Moore in April 1858:

Within the last six months there has been a most complete and entire change of provincial ruling pashas everywhere, and in every single instance the appointed man is a religious fanatic of the first water. The old race of mild gentlemanly Turks ruling under the guidance of the European consuls seems to have vanished at a moment's notice. The Turkish functionaries have lately shewn a desire to diminish European influence and check native Christian interests.⁵

¹ F.O. 78/1298, Misk to Clarendon, No. 1, Damascus, 28 Jan. 1857; F.O. 78/1387, Kayat to Clarendon, Jaffa, 13 Jan. 1858; F.O. 78/1389, Report encl. in Skene to Malmesbury, No. 25, Aleppo, 17 June 1858.

² F.O. 78/1388, Brant to Bulwer, No. 63, encl. in Brant to Malmesbury, No. 17, Damascus, 29 Dec. 1858; F.O. 78/1450, same to same, No. 2, Damascus, 15 Jan. 1859.

³ F.O. 78/1388, Brant to Malmesbury, No. 23, Damascus, 22 Apr. 1858; see also F.O. 78/1299, Moore to Redcliffe, encl. No. 2 in Moore to Clarendon, No. 2, Beirut, 21 Jan. 1857; F.O. 78/1387, Kayat to Clarendon, Jaffa, 13 Jan. 1858; F.O. 78/1389, Report from Latakia, encl. in Skene to Malmesbury, No. 52, Aleppo, 16 Oct. 1858. Cf. Davison, *Reform*, pp. 71-72; Young, ii. 231-2.

⁴ F.O. 78/1537, Finn to Bulwer, No. 9, encl. in Finn to Russell, No. 8, Jerusalem, 27 Mar. 1860.

⁵ F.O. 78/1385, Moore to Malmesbury, Nos. 17 and 18, Beirut, 28 Apr. 1858; see also F.O. 78/1298, Brant to Clarendon, No. 30, Beirut, 30 Dec. 1857; F.O. 78/1388, Brant to Malmesbury, No. 23, Damascus, 22 Apr. 1858; A.E. Damas, v, No. 60, 31 Mar. 1858.

C. The authorities' attitude towards the Christians

Unlike the Egyptian régime, which firmly sanctioned the equal rights it granted to the non-Muslims, the Turkish authorities in Syria and Palestine tended to show a lukewarm and sometimes even a hostile attitude towards Christian-Muslim equality. This was due not only to the personal views of the local Ottoman governors themselves, but was also influenced by the position taken within the *Porte* on the subject of equality. It is true that Resid and his liberal followers succeeded, with British and French help, in bringing the Sultan to promulgate his reform edicts, despite the constant strong opposition by the powerful conservative element in Istanbul. But even Resid himself, being aware of the popular dissatisfaction with the *reyas*' equality, refrained from pushing this issue to extremes and preferred the gradual way. It was presumably owing to this cautious attitude that the statement on equality in the Gülhane decree was so indecisive and that certain discriminatory measures against non-Muslims, such as the *cizye*, were not removed at once. Similarly, many of the Imperial orders sent to Syria and Palestine during the Gülhane period (up to the Crimean War) dealt mainly with the security and well-being of the *reyas* as well as their religious rights, and not with substantial steps towards political equality.¹ And when in 1856 the *Hatt-ı Hümayun*, issued by Resid's disciples Ali and Fuad, promised full equality to the *reyas*, it was criticized by Resid himself as a product of foreign intervention and as going too far too fast in granting political privileges to the Christians.²

If this was the attitude of the architect of the Tanzimat, it is not surprising that the attitude of the Turkish Pashas in Syria, who were not always in favour of reform, was even more reserved. Admittedly, a considerable number of Turkish Pashas, mostly liberal but also some conservative, would endeavour, often under foreign pressure, to protect the *reyas* against molestation by the local Muslims;³ they would likewise enforce, to a greater or lesser

¹ See *Irade D.*, No. 1402, 16 ZA 1256; *Irade H.*, No. 527, 3 CA 1257; Jaffa *Sijill*, No. 13, 11 ZA 1256; *Takvim-i Vekayi*, No. 235, 10 L 1257; F.O. 78/761, Wood to Canning, No. 26, encl. in Wood to Palmerston, No. 26, Damascus, 18 Oct. 1848; F.O. 78/871, Wood to Canning, encl. No. 2 in Wood to Palmerston, No. 17, Damascus, 28 May 1851; Khazin, i. 52-53. Cf. above, pp. 201-2.

² See Cevdet, *Tesatir*, i. 68-69, 76 ff.; see also Engelhardt, i. 140-1.

³ See *Irade H.*, No. 462/4, 25 M 1258; *Irade M.F.*, No. 5184, 21 Ş 1266; F.O.

degree, the decrees granting religious rights to the non-Muslim communities, this despite Muslim intrusion.¹ Some of the reformist and able Pashas would also, on certain occasions, back non-Muslims in the administration of justice or occasionally make special gestures towards the *rayya*.² But hardly any of these officials would go much beyond the point of securing the safety, well-being, and religious rights of the non-Muslim subjects and grant them full equality. This was partly because of the reactionary pressure brought to bear on the Pashas, as already mentioned, by conservative elements either in Istanbul or in the province itself;³ and in fact a few liberal governors in Syria were dismissed because they showed pro-Christian inclinations.⁴ Not all the well-intentioned Pashas were able to stand against such pressure and reverse these reactionary trends; some governors were even forced to take a conservative position in order to win the goodwill of the Muslim population.⁵

Yet it seems that the major cause for the reserved attitude of the liberal Pashas on the subject of equality was that many regarded the Christians as an instrument of foreign encroachment and thus as a political danger to the Ottoman state. These reformist Pashas would therefore prefer to carry out reforms in other realms of life than to place the Christians on the same footing as the Muslims. The best example for such an attitude was perhaps Mehmed Kibrish Paşa, who became the reformist Grand Vezir in 1853, and who, while serving previously in Palestine and Syria,

¹ 195/331, Moore to Canning, No. 55, Beirut, 4 Nov. 1849; F.O. 78/960, Werry to Redcliffe, No. 15, encl. in Werry to Clarendon, No. 12, Aleppo, 23 Aug. 1853; A.E. Damas, i, from Munton, No. 2, 6 Jan. 1841; A.E. Damas, ii, from de Barrère, No. 24, 14 July 1851; al-Bashā, pp. 235-8; Mansur, p. 88.

² F.O. 78/579, Wood to Aberdeen, No. 20, Damascus, 26 June 1844; F.O. 78/872, Wood to Palmerston, No. 26, Damascus, 28 July 1851; A.E. Damas, iii, No. 24, 27 May 1855; CM/041 from Klein, 2 Feb. 1842; *Rambles*, pp. 77-79.

³ F.O. 78/538, Wood to Aberdeen, No. 32, Damascus, 8 Sept. 1843; F.O. 78/801, Wood to Palmerston, No. 7, Damascus, 13 Mar. 1849; A.E. Damas, ii, from de Barrère, No. 6, 21 May 1850; al-Bashā, pp. 237-9.

⁴ See above, pp. 68-69.

⁵ See F.O. 78/447, Werry to Bidwell, No. 5, Damascus, 6 May 1841; F.O. 78/622, Wood to Aberdeen, No. 39, Damascus, 10 Nov. 1845; F.O. 195/210, Young to Canning, No. 27, Jerusalem, 27 Aug. 1844; see also A.E. Damas, i, from Munton, No. 9, 27 Mar. 1842.

⁶ F.O. 78/497, Werry to Aberdeen, No. 6, Aleppo, 2 Sept. 1842; F.O. 78/714, Timoni to Wellesley, No. 8, encl. in Timoni to Palmerston, No. 6, Damascus, 30 Apr. 1847; F.O. 78/1383, Finn to Redcliffe, No. 32, encl. in Finn to Malmesbury, No. 29, Jerusalem, 24 Oct. 1858; see also Bazili, ii, 3.

firmly carried out many administrative reforms and granted to the local Christians a considerable measure of security and religious freedom.¹ This Pasha, however, was reported to be 'decidedly anti-Christian and anti-European'; he expressed this by 'exalting the Moslem nationality and patriotism . . . accompanied it by reducing . . . the influence of the Europeans and with it the rights and equalities of the Christian Rayahs generally'.²

If this was the attitude of the prominent reformer Kibrish Paşa, there is no doubt that the conservative Pashas who served in the Syrian provinces in great frequency were even less moderate over this issue. A considerable number of such officials indeed 'made themselves conspicuous, more or less, by their fanaticism, anti-Christian and anti-progressive policy'.³ For example, some would support forced conversion of Christians (and Jews) to Islam;⁴ others would occasionally impose various restrictions on the *rayya*, refer to them in offensive terms, or even engage themselves in maltreatment of non-Muslims.⁵ Certain Turkish Pashas would, furthermore, promote anti-European and anti-Christian feelings among both the soldiers and the Muslim population, urging them 'to be ready to run to arms as soon as danger threatened Mahometanism'.⁶ In small towns, where central control was less

¹ A.E. Damas, ii, from Segur, No. 39, Oct. 1851; Taoutel, iii, 148.

² F.O. 78/871, Werry to Canning, No. 34, encl. in Werry to Palmerston, No. 13, Aleppo, 30 Aug. 1850; see also Melek Hanum, pp. 78-79; compare F.O. 78/761, Wood to Palmerston, No. 10, Damascus, 4 Mar. 1848.

³ F.O. 78/801, Wood to Canning, No. 20, encl. in Wood to Palmerston, No. 23, Damascus, 25 Sept. 1849; see also A.E. Damas, ii, from de Barrère, No. 6, 28 May 1850.

⁴ See *Irada M.V.*, No. 1818, 27 L 1263; F.O. 78/660a, Wood to Aberdeen, No. 7, Damascus, 9 Mar. 1840; F.O. 78/713, Rose to Palmerston, No. 46, Broumana, 8 Dec. 1847; F.O. 78/761, Wood to Palmerston, No. 10, Damascus, 11 Mar. 1848.

⁵ F.O. 78/456, Rose to Palmerston, No. 72, Gazir, 23 July 1841; F.O. 78/801, Wood to Palmerston, No. 29, Damascus, 29 Oct. 1849; *Accounts and Papers*, LX (1843), pt. i, No. 5, Grand Vezir to Necib Paşa, encl. in Ponsonby to Palmerston, Therapia, 15 June 1841; CM/028 from Bishop Gobat, 5 Aug. 1841; *Har al-Ihām*, p. 71; Paton, p. 33; Taoutel, iii, 28. Christians and Jews were occasionally referred to by the authorities in offensive terms even after this practice was forbidden by the 1856 *huk*. See, for example, F.O. 78/1219, Moore to Clarendon, No. 62, Beirut, 19 Dec. 1856; F.O. 78/1298, Misk to Clarendon, No. 9, Damascus, 19 June 1857; F.O. 78/1383, Finn to Malmesbury, No. 34, Jerusalem, 11 Nov. 1858; Mishāqa, MS., p. 347.

⁶ See F.O. 78/494, Rose to Aberdeen, Beirut, 5 Apr. 1842; see also F.O. 78/498, Wood to Aberdeen, No. 23, Damascus, 25 Feb. 1842; F.O. 195/320, Rose to Canning, No. 20, Beirut, 11 Aug. 1848; F.O. 78/871, Werry to Canning, No. 35, encl. in Werry to Palmerston, No. 14, Aleppo, 10 Sept. 1851.

effective, the authorities tended to violate more frequently the rights of the local *reyya*.¹

A similar attitude was taken by government troops—both regular and irregular—who would from time to time insult and attack Christians and Jews,² (although admittedly not without being usually punished afterwards by their superiors).³ One conspicuous case of such behaviour took place at the Christian village of Ma'itla in Anti-Lebanon, where irregular soldiers killed and robbed a number of unarmed inhabitants while searching for rebels during October 1850.⁴ Another such case occurred in August 1859 in the village of Ma'laga near Zahle, in which Turkish soldiers violated a church and insulted and attacked the priests.⁵ The attitude of the city police, who were recruited from Syrian Muslims, was obviously even more hostile. When, for example, in the critical days of 1860 the military commander of Aleppo was giving the local police instructions and asking them what they would do if they saw a Muslim and a Christian quarrelling, 'one of the policemen replied with the utmost simplicity that he would take the Ghiaoor (infidel) to prison, of course'.⁶

In these circumstances it is not surprising that the Muslim masses themselves, who possessed, as we know, deep motives for disliking the Christians, were occasionally involved in anti-Christian hostilities which took place in the country during the period under survey. It is true that some Muslim leaders disapproved of the use of violence against Christians, and would sometimes protect members of the Christian communities against the mob's violence.⁷ But even those notables were opposed

¹ See F.O. 78/455, Rose to Palmerston, No. 31, Beirut, 4 May 1841; F.O. 78/389, Report from Latakia, encl. in Skene to Malmesbury, No. 52, Aleppo, 16 Oct. 1858; F.O. 78/1294, Finn to Clarendon, No. 1, Jerusalem, 1 Jan. 1857 in Hyamson, i, 245; A.E. Alep, i, from Guys, No. 66, 10 Sept. 1841.

² F.O. 78/444, Young to Palmerston, No. 5, Jaffa, 25 Jan. 1841; F.O. 78/1383, Finn to Malmesbury, No. 33, Jerusalem, 8 Nov. 1858; A.E. Jerusalem, i, from Lantivy, No. 53, 18 Apr. 1844; A.E. Damas, ii, from Bourville, No. 11, 20 Mar. 1848.

³ See, for example, F.O. 78/455, Rose to Palmerston, No. 70, Beirut, 28 May 1841; F.O. 78/836, Moore to Palmerston, No. 21, Beirut, 1 Apr. 1850.

⁴ See F.O. 195/291, Calvert to Canning, No. 29, Damascus, 23 Oct. 1850.

⁵ *Trade H.*, No. 9507/9, 28 B 1276; A.E. Damas, v, from Outrey, No. 77, 14 Aug. 1859; F.O. 78/1454, Brant to Butler, No. 26, encl. in Brant to Russell, No. 7, Damascus, 24 Sept. 1859.

⁶ *Rambles*, p. 251.

⁷ See F.O. 78/448, Werry to Ponsonby, Aleppo, 29 Jan. 1841; F.O. 195/170, Wood to Bankhead, No. 16, Damascus, 15 Dec. 1841; F.O. 78/836, Rose to

to Christian equality in principle and would, alongside other 'Ulema, use their great influence and official positions as heads of the religious institutions and as councillors, to subvert the new privileges of the *reyya*.¹ On the other hand, a large portion of the Muslim leadership—'Ulema and members of the *mechi*—did foment, back, or direct virtually all anti-Christian riots of that period,² the gravest of which occurred in the period following the promulgation of the *Hatt-i Hümeyun* of February 1856.

Canning, No. 47, encl. in Rose to Palmerston, No. 48, Beirut, 3 Nov. 1856; A.E. Damas, iv, from Outrey, No. 24, 12 Jan. 1857; *Bhyti Bariz*, Nos. 33 and 40; Taoutel, iii, 31; Mangut, p. 89. See also below, p. 230.

¹ See, for example, A.E. Damas, i, from Munton, No. 2, 6 Jan. 1841; F.O. 195/207, Werry to Canning, No. 17, Aleppo, 23 Sept. 1843; F.O. 78/619, Wood to Canning, No. 39, encl. in Wood to Aberdeen, No. 41, Damascus, 4 Dec. 1845; F.O. 78/1217, Finn to Clarendon, No. 55, Jerusalem, 1 Sept. 1856; al-Bashā, pp. 235 ff.; Finn, ii, 20; Paton, pp. 33-34. Note that Amir 'Abd al-Qādir, the great saviour of Christians during the 1860 events, was reported to have said that if he were to be the governor of Syria he 'would not allow Christians to enter the army nor to testify against Moslems as Christians can never be on an equality with Moslems'. See Jessup, i, 203.

² See *Trade M.V.*, No. 5184, 21 S 1266; F.O. 195/234, Rose to Canning, No. 20, Beirut, 8 Mar. 1844; F.O. 78/801, Wood to Palmerston, No. 7, Damascus, 13 Mar. 1849; A.E. Damas, iii, from de Jong, 6 Feb. 1853; F.O. 195/416, Barker to Redcliffe, No. 25, Aleppo, 28 June 1856; F.O. 195/524, Finn to Redcliffe, No. 29, Jerusalem, 22 July 1857; CM/034 from Revd. Jacob, Nazareth, 30 Sept. 1858; Taoutel, ii, 76; Urcuhart, ii, 68-69; see also below, the incidents in Nablus, Gaza, and Marrāṣ, pp. 226 ff.