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The Capitulations and the Ottoman Legal System

Qadis, Consuls and *Beratlis* in the 18th Century

Author: Maurits van den Boogert

Pre-modern Western sources generally claim that European mercantile communities in the Ottoman Empire enjoyed legal autonomy, and were thus effectively immune to Ottoman justice. At the same time, they report numerous disputes with Ottoman officials over jurisdiction ("avantias"), which seems to contradict this claim, the discrepancy being considered proof of the capriciousness of the Ottoman legal system. Modern studies of Ottoman-European relations in this period have tended uncritically to accept this interpretation, which is challenged in this book.

Readership

All those interested in legal history, the history of Islamic law, the history of the Ottoman Empire, the history of European-Ottoman relations, as well as historians of the Middle East in general.

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Biographical Note

Maurits H. van den Boogert, Ph.D. (Leiden, 2001) is the (co-)editor of four volumes on Ottoman-European relations, including *The Ottoman Capitulations: Text and Context* (Rome, 2003, with Kate Fleet) and *Friends and Rivals in the East* (Brill, 2000, with Alastair Hamilton and Alexander de Groot). In 2010 he published *Aleppo Observed: Ottoman Syria Through the Eyes of Two Scottish Doctors, Alexander and Patrick Russell* (Oxford University Press). He is now the Publishing Director for Middle East, Islam, and African Studies at Brill.

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