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The Age of the Eastern Question

A few months after the Ottoman defeat in the Battle of Nizib (June 1839), the Ottoman grand vizier Hüsrev Paşa dispatched the two heads of the Jumblatt family, Numan and Said, from Asia Minor to Egypt. A few other Druze *muqatadjis*, Qasim al-Kadi and Yusuf Abu Nakad were to accompany the Jumblatts. Hüsrev's was a tactical move to destabilize Mount Lebanon, as he asked his old nemesis Mehmed Ali to procure for the Druze the restoration of their property in the mountain. The grand vizier expected that that it would deal a blow to Cairo's relations with Grand Emir Bashir II.[1]

Since the European Great Powers had just declared their support of the Porte, and Mehmed Ali was anxious to solve the dispute with Istanbul before 'foreign involvement', the paşa of Egypt accepted Hüsrev's request. He did not immediately send the Druze sheikhs to Lebanon, though. He knew that the grand emir would refuse to return the property of his Jumblatt rivals. What Mehmed Ali did instead was keep Numan and Said in Egypt and grant them an allowance of £170 per annum, with the purpose of attaching the Jumblatt brothers to his interest. His plan was to use them at the right time.[2]

Mehmed Ali dispatched the Druze chiefs back to Mount Lebanon only one year later, when the intervention of the Quadruple Alliance and the Porte began in August 1840 and proved disastrous to him. He endowed Numan and Said with military command, money, and decorations, and tasked them with consolidating the south of Lebanon, where, according to Mehmed Ali, the Maronites were 'the fiercest of [all] the Maronites'.' He pledged to them the restitution of their ancient privileges and rights as well as their traditional role as the rulers of the mountain.[3] It was with these expectations that the Jumblatt leaders bade their farewell to him in late 1840 and set out for home after nearly ten years of exile. But, once back in Mount Lebanon, they did not find peace and quiet. The mountain was embroiled in inter-imperial rivalries, and struggles for liberties and privileges. It was already ripe for civil war.

[1] L'Ambassade de France à Constantinople to Desages, 7 July 1840, AMAE PAAP37/77.
[2] Rose to Aberdeen, 22 June 1841, TNA FO 226/26, f. 112; Mishaqa, *Murder*, 224.
[3] Bashir al-Qasim to Wood, 18 Nov. 1840, *RWEC*, 182–3.

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'The Old Days Have Passed': The Civil War of 1841 and its Aftermath

When Numan and Said arrived in the mountain in late January or early February, they observed that British influence was paramount there. Especially since the Ottoman *serasker* and interim governor İzzet Paşa left Syria in November 1840 after accidentally shooting himself in the leg, the British dragoman Wood had emerged as the most influential figure. He had been endowed with wide authorities by the Porte, and then he had successfully orchestrated the Lebanese revolt since the summer of 1840. A contemporary French author compared the British dragoman to 'a vizier speaking with the authority of the Qu'ran'.[4] The French consul in Beirut, the comte de Meloizes, grudgingly wrote that Wood was the 'de facto governor general of Syria'.[5] Wood himself was proud that 'the country may be said to have been administered by us [the British]'.[6]

He had deposed Grand Emir Bashir II the previous October and sent him into exile due to the Shihab leader's loyalty to Mehmed Ali and reluctance to cooperate with the Quadruple Alliance. The new grand emir, Bashir Qasim Shihab, was regarded by many as an instrument of Wood's control.[7] To the Jumblatts, Bashir II's deposition from power was good news. But they were wary of Wood's dominant position. They believed that Wood was a Catholic, and therefore a Maronite sympathizer. That he had procured a decoration from the Ottoman sultan for the Maronite patriarch Hubaysh and direct representation before the Porte in Istanbul were testaments to this, they assumed.[8] Moreover, they sensed that Wood was politically and emotionally distant from the *muqatadjis*.

Only in the latter sense were they correct, however. In fact, Wood was brought up by his family as a Protestant.[9] But he was indeed opposed to feudal rule in Mount Lebanon. He had collaborated with the Christian peasants during the 1840 intervention, and had pledged to them at the time that with the Gülhane Edict of 1839, their liberties, property, and security, both as Christians and peasants, would be placed under the guarantee of the imperial state. The British dragoman knew that the peasants had clung to this hope ever since, while fighting tooth and nail against Mehmed Ali's armies. And now, they eagerly waited for the promises to be kept.

The quandary was that, even theoretically, guaranteeing the peasants' liberties by law was at odds with the restitution of the feudal privilege of the *muqatadjis*,

[4] Bouyrat, *La France*, 283.
[5] Meloizes to Guizot, 26 Feb. 1841, AMAE CPC Beirut, vol. 2; cf. Bouyrat, *La France*, 283.
[6] Wood to Ponsonby, 17 Feb. 1841, *RWEC*, 213.
[7] Steindl Diary, 8 Oct. 1840, HHStA, StAbt, Türkei VI 76; Stürmer to Metternich, 21 Oct. 1840, HHStA, StAbt, Türkei VI 76.
[8] Defter IV, p. 67 a–b. Also in Ata, 'Osmanlı', 179; Rose to Palmerston, 22 June 1841, TNA FO 226/26/112.
[9] Grenville Withers to Wood, 7 April 1842, SAMECO Box 5, File 1.

who expected that their properties would be fully restored to them. This was why Wood considered the return of former lands of the *muqatadjis* to them by feudal right to be 'impossible'. It would undermine the authority of the sultan since it was 'diametrically opposed' to the liberties introduced in the Gülhane Edict. He sided with the peasants, even if not with the Maronite church, considering the *muqatadjis* as 'little tyrants' who were inclined to oppress the 'poor peasants' at their *'muqatas*. To Wood, the establishment of full security in the mountain entailed the peasants' protection from the ills of the old order.[10]

Due to the suspicions the Jumblatts harboured toward Wood, even though he de facto ruled the mountain, once Numan Jumblatt returned to the mountain, he immediately went to see Niven Moore, the British consul in Beirut (and Wood's brother-in-law). The Jumblatt leader sought to obtain by 'feudal right' the possession of the Jumblatts' former landed property that had been confiscated in 1825.[11] This had been promised to them by both Hüsrev Paşa in Istanbul and Mehmed Ali in Cairo. Moore gave him only a tentative answer, lacking any authority and any clear views on the matter.

Shortly afterwards, though, it became clear that the Jumblatts' property in the Shuf region had been confiscated by the imperial treasury (not by Bashir II), and it was returned to them by law. The family then resettled in their residence in Mukhtara and retained control of most of their former *muqatas*. They immediately became the richest family in Mount Lebanon once again, only to realize that, as with most other Druze sheikhs reinstated to their lands, the quality of their relations with their Maronite tenants had changed.[12]

After more than a decade of absence of their overlords, the Maronite peasantry had grown accustomed to direct rule and the protection of a Maronite Shihabi emir against the *muqatadjis*.[13] Now more vocal political actors, with the support of the Church behind them, they held on tightly to the religious rights and liberties that had been introduced first during the Egyptian interregnum and then pledged by the Gülhane Edict of 1839. They were therefore unhappy with the return of the Jumblatts and other Druze sheikhs in exile. They complained to Patriarch Hubaysh about 'the harsh treatment they were receiving from their lords', and the obnoxious attitude of the Druze officers whom the *muqatadjis*, including the Jumblatts, had appointed to collect taxes.[14] The patriarch's attempts to intervene in the *muqatas* on behalf of the peasants became a recipe for crisis.

[10] Wood to Huseyin Paşa, 22 Feb. 1841, *RWEC*, 218–19.
[11] Wood to Ponsonby, 24 Feb. 1841, *RWEC*, 222–3; Harik, *Politics*, 253; Hazran, 'Janblat', 353.
[12] Rose to Palmerston, 22 June 1841, TNA FO 226/26/112; 'Rapport de Bourée sur les évènements du Liban', n.d.; 'Tableau des familles druzes classées en raison de leur importance et de leur influence', AMAE 50MD/43/12–15.
[13] Harik, *Politics*, 251–3.
[14] Hubaysh Papers, MS 5812, 8215, and 3522; cf. Harik, *Politics*, 253–4.

Observing these tensions as early as February 1841, Wood presciently reported that a 'partial civil war' might erupt in Lebanon 'sooner or later' as a natural outcome of 'the effervescence that had existed for years in the minds of the people, of the [feudal] tyranny and oppression under which they suffered, of smothered and angry feelings, and of the [peasantry's] sudden emancipation from slavery'.[15] He listed seven material causes that could stir up hostilities:

> firstly, the [Muslim] population began to evince a disposition to assume their ancient superiority over the Christians. Secondly, the Christians of the different persuasions revived old religious animosities and controversies among themselves. Thirdly, the Druses betrayed their secret intention of separating themselves from the Maronites whose supremacy over them is a matter of national vexation to them, fourthly, the [*muqatadjis*] or Lords of the Manor of every denomination insisted upon having restored to them their feudal rights over the peasantry, fifthly, the peasantry said they would resist it and claimed the equal participation of rights granted to them by the [*Tanzimat*], which promise made them take up arms to expel the enemy [in 1840]. Sixthly, the Sheikhs reproduced their old family feuds . . . and, seventhly, the Arabs of the [d]esert commenced their encroachments and their predatory excursions on the borders. Added to the above the French [government] began to intrigue more openly.[16]

These emotional and material factors illustrate the degree of convolution in the politics of Lebanon. And each of these merits serious attention in analyses of the origins of the civil wars in the 1840s and later in 1860.[17]

The land disputes, however, were of pivotal importance, as by the end of the year they had sharpened all other differences into violence. As early as the first months of 1841, as Makdisi tells us, Mount Lebanon buzzed with questions over which land belonged to whom, and how to 'reconceptualize' these lands and the people that dwelt on them.[18] Not all Druze *muqatadjis* were as fortunate as the Jumblatts in terms of retaining possession of their pre-1831 lands. Particularly in the environs of the silk-rich Deir al-Qamar, the land issue became very strained because the Nakads were not allowed by Grand Emir Bashir Qasim Shihab to return to their former *muqatas*, possibly at the direction of Wood.[19] Furthermore, the Maronite inhabitants of these *muqatas* adamantly refused to submit to the authority of their former 'Druze' masters. They would agree only to

[15] Wood to Ponsonby, 17 Feb. 1841, *RWEC*, 213–14. [16] Ibid.

[17] However, due to limitations of space, I will not delve into all of these dynamics in my discussion here. For a truly thorough and comprehensive study that details the origins of conflict with a multi-level analysis, see Farah, *Politics*, esp. ch. 4.

[18] Makdisi, *Culture*, 67.

[19] The grand emir based his argument on the grounds that these *muqatas* had been confiscated by Bashir II in the 1810s and had become a Shihab belonging according to the Ottoman law.

a Maronite sheikh as an overseer of the region. The Nakads were thereupon settled in 'Baiy, where they worked to turn the situation in their favour.[20]

From the outset, a degree of sectarian mistrust, reminiscent of pre-1840 politics, was discernible in the mountain. So was the weakening of old feudal ties. Seeing that the differences and resentments amongst the mountaineers were critical and had to be urgently addressed, Wood encouraged the establishment of a mixed consultative council (*divan*), which duly assembled in May 1841.[21] In a similar vein to the council established under Egyptian rule in the 1830s, this new *Tanzimat* council consisted of members to be elected by the patriarchs of the Christian churches (Maronite, Greek Catholic, and Greek Orthodox), by the Druze, Turkish (Sunni), and Metuwali (Shi'ite) law (one each), by the people of the five districts of Mount Lebanon (one each), as well as by a president to be appointed by the grand emir.

The mixed composition of the council—sectarian and ethnic as well as regional—reflected the mixed solution that Wood strove to introduce in the country under the inspiration of the Gülhane Edict. He wanted to prevent the return of the ancient feudal system that had characterized pre-1831 Lebanese politics by means of introducing a new model whereby the council would protect the liberties of peasants without completely excluding the *muqatadjis* from political decision-making processes and maintaining their status as elites.

However, a majority of the Druze feudal lords, and in fact also the Maronites *muqatadjis*, cleaved to their class instincts, and felt ill-disposed to permit the curbing of their powers through the institution of a superior authority (the council) that would intervene in the 'internal' problems of their *muqatas*. The Jumblatts sought to block the assembly of the council by suggesting an increase in the number of Druze representatives. Issues remained unaddressed. Bitter sentiments lingered. Small-scale skirmishes even took place in the disputed lands of Deir al-Qamar region between the Maronite peasants and the Druze Nakad sheikhs in the spring of 1841.[22] With hindsight, one might say that these were the rolls of thunder before the storm.

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The prime movers and victims of the violence that would soon ensue were almost entirely Lebanese, mainly the Maronites, the Druze, and the Greek Orthodox. But like the Mamluks and Albanians of the 1800s in Ottoman Egypt,[23] these local actors also looked to grasp the hands of European and Ottoman imperial agents in the overwhelmingly rapid stream of events while navigating their direction in the

[20] Bourée to Guizot, 19 Aug. 1841, *DDC* vol. 6, 423; Harik, *Politics*, 253.

[21] 'Memorandum from Wood to Emir Bashir for forming provisional regulations for the government of Mt Lebanon', 11 Feb. 1841, SAMECO Box 4.

[22] Farah, *Politics*, 91–7.

[23] See Ch. 3.

confused tide of their time. Unlike all the previous civil wars fought in the mountain, violence in 1841 and after proved to be of an inter-imperial character.

In fact, already in the 1830s, when Lebanon had turned into a major commercial centre with increasing missionary activity under the relatively more stable Egyptian rule, the country had become an arena for sectarian/inter-imperial competition among the European Powers. For instance, when the Russian general consulate in Jaffa had been moved to Beirut, 'this market of the whole of Syria', one of St Petersburg's specific aims was to 'supervise the intrigues of [the Maronites against the Orthodox] and to take timely action [against them]'.[24]

In 1839, during their anti-Egyptian rebellion in Hawran, the Druze had sought the guardianship of Britain against French-backed Egypt 'with perfect conviction that they would enjoy the same protection and privileges as [Britain's] other Colonies[,] particularly India . . . '[25] In return, British authorities agreed that they would 'obtain for [the Druze] the best security that hereafter they shall not be disturbed in the free enjoyment of their own institutions & liberty & security for their persons and property'.[26] Just like the Mamluks in the 1800s, the Druze would repeatedly remind the British of this promise.

In the early 1840s, Mount Lebanon was subsumed in the transimperial security culture. The Powers continuously and directly intervened in its domestic affairs. They held ambassadorial and consular conferences in Istanbul and Syria at the time, so that they could act in accord with each other, perpetuating their interests while cushioning their rivalries. Controversial as it might sound, this European co-imperialism aimed to establish a 'benevolent' Western protectorate over the East to supervise the 'half-civilized' mountain-dwellers to civilization—something that Alphonse de Lamartine had argued for in 1840.[27] But, at the same time, the agents of the interfering Powers, and particularly Britain and France, were engaged in ardent competition, in a geostrategic struggle that aimed to restrain each other from becoming the paramount power in the Levant—a status that France had previously experienced alone and that Britain was currently enjoying. They did not want to allow any actor control of the lucrative silk industry of the mountain. Nor did they wish to permit any religious establishment to dominate the field of missionary activity.

All these demarcated the age of the Eastern Question in Lebanon. As Arsan explained better than anyone, for French thinkers and politicians, in the geostrategic sense, the Eastern Question,

[24] Butenev to Nesselrode, 13 Nov. 1839, AVPRI, f. 149, o. 502/1, d. 397, ll. 1–3; 'O peremeshhenii Konsul'stva iz Jaffy v Bejrut. Na podlinnike Sobstvennoyu Ego Imperatorskogo Velichestva rukoyu napisano. Byt' po semu', 30 Dec. 1830, AVPRI f. 149, o. 502/1, d. 397, ll. 41–5.

[25] Wood to Ponsonby, 14 Oct. 1839, *RWEC*, 136.

[26] Ponsonby to Wood, 17 Oct. 1839, *RWEC*, 138.

[27] N. Moore to [?], 31 May 1844, AMAE 50MD/43/94. For Lamartine's arguments, see Ch. 8.

> was never . . . simply [a concern to strengthen France's position in the Mediterranean and to consolidate its hold over Algeria]. Nor was it primarily about maintaining the continental balance of power, though such concerns were undoubtedly of great consequence. Rather, their eyes were trained upon the Mediterranean—upon securing French supremacy upon its waves and around its shores and on preventing Britain from establishing its own hold on the middle sea. Mount Lebanon, that distant outpost of France, served an important function in such strategic calculations.[28]

Lamartine wrote in 1838 that Syria at large could be the 'Ancona of the East'—a crucial port for French preponderance in the Mediterranean within a 'European system of alliance' that could be attached to Paris by means of local co-religionists who 'offered themselves to France'.[29]

But France had found herself in an awkward and humiliating position since August 1840, when the Maronites, her historical protégés and local co-religionists, revolted against the French-sponsored Mehmed Ali and the latter had ferociously suppressed them. Accordingly, Franco-Maronite relations had been enfeebled, and then threatened, by the Austrian schemes to establish special relations with the Maronites with a view to assuming the historical role of France.[30]

This was why the Guizot government took a more assertive line of action in 1841, and energetically toiled to reconfigure the Syrian order.[31] They developed a fourfold programme with which France (i) reinforced her military presence on the spot, promising to dispatch a naval ship (which arrived only in September 1841), as some 1,500 British troops were still stationed in the Lebanon;[32] (ii) initiated a diplomatic dispositive by the appointment of fixed, experienced, and well-paid diplomats particularly in the key towns of Tripoli, Sayda, Jaffa, and Caiffa; (iii) launched a triple offensive in London, Istanbul, and Beirut to pressure for the removal of Austrian and British troops from Syria as a precondition for the return of France to the Concert of Europe.[33] For this, French agents strongly advised Ottoman officials to preserve their independence from London. And (iv) France supplied credit to poor Maronite families and ecclesiastical institutions, who had suffered materially during the revolt against Mehmed Ali, and provided gifts for the propagation of religion and scholarships for education at French schools.[34]

Day by day, the *'muqatas* of the Lebanese feudal lords were drawn into the Eastern Question. Receiving the eager succour of French agents, the Maronite

[28] Arsan, 'Mount Lebanon', 80–81.
[29] Lamartine, *La Question*, 234.
[30] 'Note sur les influences étrangères et la politique turque au Liban', 28 Dec. 1841, *DDC* vol. 6, 66.
[31] 'Notes diverses relatives au Liban, 1840–63', n.d., par L. de Amandy, AMAE 50MD/138/327.
[32] Bouyrat, *La France*, 286–7.
[33] Baron de Bourqueney to Guizot, 11 Mar. 1841, AMAE CP Angleterre 657; cf. Bouyrat, *La France*, 287.
[34] Bourée to Guizot, 18 Apr. 1841, AMAE CPC Beirut, vol. 2; cf. Bouyrat, *La France*, 287.

peasantry grew in confidence and found the courage to stand against their Druze overlords. Figures like bishop Tobia ʿAwn (1803–71), a hardline Maronite clergyman openly devoted to the French cause, encouraged the peasants to stand for their rights. The Maronite Church had in view the continuing rule of the Maronite Shihab family, maintaining their own influence over the country, and cementing a Maronite community (ʿ*imarriyah*)—ideals that coalesced with French imperial objectives over time.

These Franco-Maronite affective ties adversely affected the peasants' personal bonds of loyalty with the Druze *muqatadjis*, tarnished as they already were. The Jumblatts were alarmed. Numan believed that the Maronites were now considering the French, the Greek Orthodox, the Russians, and the Greek Catholics, the Austrians, 'as their protectors', and the Druze were in need of one. It was necessary, above all, to maintain landlord–tenant ties and to secure the family's authority and prestige in relation to their *muqatas*. In May 1841, during an interview with Colonel Hugh Rose, who was in command of the British contingent in Lebanon at the time and who would soon become the British consul in Beirut (Wood was on his way to Istanbul at the time to advise on the future of Syria and peace talks with Mehmed Ali), Numan maintained that his family had 'now more money than [they] required and that, all he wished for now was good government and order, which would ensure him the possession of his large property'.

In Numan's view, the most effective way to secure his wealth was the 'maintenance of British connection with Syria and the education of his countrymen'. He professed that 'he himself and his people as far as he could influence them would be ready to be guided in [their] conduct by the wishes of Her Majesty's Government'. Following the model of the Catholic Jesuits, Franciscans, and Lazarists, Numan proposed setting up a college run by the British (Protestants) where his countrymen could be educated. He was ready to give Rose substantial proof of his sincerity and confidence in the British government. 'I am going to ask you to forward my request to Viscount Palmerston to permit my youngest brother Ismail to be educated in England.' He added: '[W]hen I give my brother, I give my soul.'[35]

This was how a special relationship formed between Britain and the Jumblatts and the Druze under their sway, while Wood was away. As in 1803, when the Mamluk Alfi Bey had himself set out for London to obtain British protection, Numan sent his brother with the same purpose in 1841. Palmerston approved the dispatch of Ismail Jumblatt, Numan's brother, to London for education but not without stressing that the relationship between Britain and the Druze be based on an understanding that this link would be used to strengthen the connection of the

[35] Rose to Palmerston, 22 June 1841, TNA FO 226/26, f. 107.

Druze with the sovereign authority, the sultan. Britain would only use her influence in Istanbul in favour of the Druze—the very promise the British authorities had delivered to the Mamluks in 1801.[36]

Ismail spent two years in London, mostly melancholic and homesick, and decided to return home after his instructor, Mr Pain, attempted to convert him to Protestantism. Back in Mount Lebanon, it remained for Rose to follow orders and put the Druze in touch with the Protestant (mostly American) missionaries operating in Lebanon.[37] Numan invited the latter to offer education to make 'our children better than their parents' as they were 'alive to our own imperfections', so that 'our children should not inherit them by seeking the aid of those [Protestant missionaries] who had the means of raising us in the seal of civilisation'.[38] Shortly after, missionaries were sent also from Britain to open schools with a view to evangelizing the Druze.[39] Protestant–Druze activity concerned the Maronite clergy as well as the Catholic missionaries. The religious hue of the inter-imperial competition in the mountain became ever more apparent from then on.[40]

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To underline once again, the Eastern Question was an intersubjective and diachronic process, and as much an Ottoman question as a European one. Besides the ambitions of the Great Powers and the interests of the Lebanese, the ambivalent policies of the Porte to restore its imperial domination in its periphery constituted a major factor that shaped the tragic course of events on the way to the civil war in Mount Lebanon in September 1841.

In the first three months of the year, ruling elites in Istanbul continuously welcomed advice from their allies in Vienna, Berlin, St Petersburg, and London on the new order to be established in Syria. The sultan's cabinet had been keen to discuss how to conduct the reforms there. But, after the fall of the cabinet of Grand Vizier Rauf and Foreign Minister Mustafa Reşid in March 1841,[41] imperial authority passed into the hands of more conservative figures, a group of reluctant reformists.

The new grand vizier, İzzet Mehmet, the former serasker who had led the Lebanon campaign in 1840, and his men followed a policy which sat uneasily with the form and formula of the *Tanzimat*.[42] They laboured to reverse some of the *Tanzimat* reforms such as the abolition of the tax-farming system, the system of direct tax collection, and the reduction of the powers of the governors. The new ministers called for caution and

[36] Firro, *Druzes*, 85. [37] BOA HR.SFR.3 4/67/1, May 1843.

[38] 'Numan's Testament', in Rose to Aberdeen, 7 Dec. 1841, SAMECO Box 5, File 1. In fact, a great proportion of the higher class among the Druze were literate at the time. Bird to Anderson, 17 Oct. 1834, ABCFM vol. 1, Syria, 118/45.

[39] Rose to Palmerston, 7 Sept. 1841, TNA FO 78/486/86 ; cf. Rizk, *Mont Liban*, 108.

[40] Rose to Aberdeen, 7 Dec. 1841, SAMECO Box 5, File 1; Will Thomson, 'Report on the Political Institutions of Lebanon and their Probable Influence on the Prosperity of the Mission', 6 Apr. 1844, ABCFM vol. 1, Syria, 118/33.

[41] See Ch. 8. [42] BOA A.DVN.MHM 2/21; also in Farah, *Politics*, 52–3.

greater watchfulness in the implementation of other reforms.[43] Their policy was also bent on resisting Great Power interference in Ottoman domestic politics in Lebanon, hoping to preserve the sovereignty of their empire.

Ironically, in early April 1841, only days after Reşid's fall, before the news broke in Syria, the provisions of the Gülhane Edict of 1839 were read out before the local gentry and European consuls in Beirut. But, a few weeks later, two conservative paşas with notoriously anti-Reşid sentiments, Selim and Necib, were dispatched to Syria as the paşas of Sidon and Damascus respectively.

The onlookers found Necib's appointment in particular to be 'absurd' because he had served as an agent of Mehmed Ali of Egypt in Istanbul for nearly three decades, and was known to be a man 'with retrograde ideas'. Just over a year after his appointment, the European consuls believed that they could better understand his appointment when Necib allegedly 'frankly admit[ted]' that it was a consequence of the desire 'to neutralise the pernicious effects of the system of Reşid Paşa, [i.e. the *Tanzimat*] . . . that the main members of the [Ottoman imperial council] intended to make Syria the house of Islamism and thus bring about the fall, piece by piece' of Reşid's scheme.[44]

This did not simply mean that the two paşas were against reform of any kind, as reports of European historical actors would have us believe. Recent scholarship has already demonstrated the futility of the binary divisions between reformist and anti-reformist paşas in analysing the contestations within the Ottoman bureaucracy.[45] Selim and Necib were conservative reformists, with strong reservations concerning Reşid's project, which they believed was a product of European interference. Despite their lack of tact and an empty treasury, they sought to establish a direct, centralized Muslim authority in the country through administrative reform and the presence of a new *Arabistan* army with around 25,000 men, though they were never able to enlist more than 10,000. With their initiatives and following their reports, the seat of Sidon was moved to Beirut. The grand emirate of Mount Lebanon was subordinated to the governor of Sidon, while previously it had reported directly to the Porte.[46]

However, in almost each of their moves, the two paşas antagonized the European consuls.[47] And with each European interference, in the form of advice or complaint, the Ottoman governors felt more and more aggrieved.[48] The paşas were then caught up in an unpleasant feud with European authorities about the lingering presence of British troops as well as the purportedly 'Islamist' policies of

[43] İnalcık, *Tanzimat*, 19–20.

[44] 'Memorandum of what has been obtained of the Sublime Porte for the Syrians', by R. Wood, 9 Aug. 1841, TNA FO 881/2983/5; Bourée to Guizot, 26 Mar. 1842, *DDC* vol. 6, 107.

[45] Olivier Bouquet, 'Is It Time to Stop Speaking about Ottoman Modernisation?', in Marc Aymes, Benjamin Gourisse, and Elise Masicard (eds), *Order and Compromise: Government Practices in Turkey from the Late Ottoman Empire to the Early 21st Century* (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 62–3.

[46] BOA i.DH. 40/1867.

[47] BOA i.HR. 11/552.

[48] BOA i.HR. 11/526; BOA HR.MKT. 1/17.

Necib, who, Rose argued, consciously fomented troubles in the country in order to destabilize Syria, while the negotiations of the Porte and the Powers with Mehmed Ali, Necib's alleged master, were still under way.[49]

Necib rejected such accusations. Nonetheless his presence and arguably anti-Christian policies, with an unofficial, quasi-paramilitary unit under his command (led by the Druze Shibli al-Aryan) dragged the country closer to violence.[50] To check Necib's actions, Wood was appointed as British consul to Damascus in October 1841. Wood then fought a bitter, secret war with Necib until the paşa was removed from office in early 1842.[51]

All this is to say that the European Powers' quest for sway in the Levant overlapped, at least at first, with the Porte's 'conservative turn' and quest for independence more than with the (non-)introduction of the *Tanzimat* reforms in Lebanon. The council of representatives in the mountain, for instance, was unable to convene due to domestic opposition. The change of the cabinet in Istanbul created confusion and fear on the part of the non-Muslim Lebanese and drove them closer to their co-religionists among the Powers, while the Syrian Muslims found in this a baffled hope. The Druze, for their part, and especially the Jumblatts, tried to win over the Porte's conservative paşas, while simultaneously fostering 'special relations' with British agents.

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It was at this hour that war came. There is no single, linear explanation as to why violence broke loose in Mount Lebanon in September 1841. As we have seen, compound, intertwined factors fed into the complex realities of the country: the interests and threat perceptions of the different sects, classes, missionaries and empires whose agents were daily operating and interacting with each other on the spot. Violence was therefore the catastrophic 'emergent property'[52] of a fluid constellation—the sudden frenzy that accompanied an unfaltering collapse into enmity.

The mountain-dwellers spent the summer of 1841 attempting to take a collective position against the Porte with regards to the heavy new taxes imposed by the Istanbul government in violation of what had been promised during the 1840 intervention. Just when the Lebanese needed unity and cooperation the most, acrimonious sentiments poured forth. Their assemblies for the reduction of taxes were overshadowed by the embittered Nakads' call for the election of a

[49] Rose to Palmerston, 24 July 1841, TNA FO 226/26/121; Memorandum of what has been obtained of the Sublime Porte for the Syrians, signed by R. Wood, 9 Aug. 1841, TNA FO 881/2983/5. For Otto-Egyptian negotiations in 1841, see Ch. 8.

[50] Wood to Mustafa Paşa, 2 Feb. 1842, BOA HR.SYS 912/1.

[51] BOA i.HR. 11/537; Caesar Farah, 'Necip Pasha and the British in Syria 1841–1842', *Archivium Ottomanicum* 2 (1970): 115–53.

[52] On the notion of 'emergent property' and the use of complexity theory in conflict analysis, see Diana Hendrick, 'Complexity Theory and Conflict Transformation: An Exploration of Potential and Implications' (University of Bradford Working Paper 17, 2009), 6, 33, 34, 39.

non-Shihab grand emir.[53] The Porte's agents and the Lebanese agreed on a common tax scheme in early September, with the mediation of Wood. But the stage for violence had already been set.

The civil war began on 13 September 1841 in Deir al-Qamar, the very region where unresolved land disputes between the Druze Nakad family and the Maronite peasants had been under way. A small quarrel between Maronite and Nakad hunters quickly snowballed into fighting and pillaging, and then spread from Deir al-Qamar to other villages, though the most violent scenes transpired, it was reported, in this district. The main perpetrators were Druze and Maronite peasants, as well as impoverished sheikhs who had been unable to retain their lands in the ancient system.

The Jumblatts, and a number of other leading Druze and Maronite families, at first sought to placate them, convening meetings with Maronite Patriarch Hubaysh and other leading clergy of the mountain. Numan sent his brother Said to the villages in the 'war zones' to calm the atmosphere, where he swore 'to severely punish the guilty'.[54] Numan himself went to Grand Emir Bashir Qasim to 'concert measures against his Druze co-religionists', because the Maronites had by that point heavily overwhelmed their co-belligerents and there were cries for vengeance.[55] But, in the end, the Jumblatts joined the fighting when a mob of Druze peasants turned up at their residence, criticized their pacifist position, insistently called for their support in compelling the Maronites to return the 'murderers' of their families, and threatened to kill Numan otherwise.

Rose reported that Numan was known to be a man 'certainly . . . not cruel', and ready to show 'humanity and liberality' to the Christians, as he reportedly avoided pillaging their property and had been seen 'holding an old Christian [villager] in each hand and asking for peace' amidst all the violence. That said, as Numan himself explained after the fighting was over, he had also grown antipathetic to the 'Maronite party', since the clergy had been looking to 'greatly curtail' the feudal rights of the Druze sheikhs and when 'the Patriarch illegally and secretly endeavoured to do away with [them]', taunting them 'continually with our savageness'.[56]

Numan's 17-year old Said, on the other hand, was described as a 'wild boy . . . with a good deal of courage' and 'guilty . . . of great cruelty' during the clash.[57] In November 1841, with the involvement of the Jumblatts, the Druze gained a significant advantage over the Maronites. The combat later spread to the Shuwfayat region, the Greek Orthodox–Druze district, as the Orthodox community, 'suspicious of the Maronites and resentful of their numerical superiority', supported their Druze neighbours against the Maronites.[58]

[53] Farah, *Politics*, 67; Rose to Palmerston, 28 May 1841, TNA FO 226/26/78; Rose to Palmerston, 6 June 1841, TNA FO 226/26/104.
[54] J. Conti to Bourée, 22 Sept. 1841, *DDC* vol. 6, 448. [55] Ibid.
[56] 'Numan's Testament', in Rose to Aberdeen, 7 Dec. 1841, SAMECO Box 5, File 1.
[57] Rose [?] to Foreign Secretary, 6 May 1842, TNA FO 226/24/36. [58] Salibi, *Lebanon*, 51.

The theatre of war in Lebanon and the stance of the Powers and the Porte illustrate how the Eastern Question played out on the spot. In the initial phases of combat in October, when Maronites (the French protégés) held an advantage over the Druze (the British protégés), the French consul, Nicolas Prosper Bourée, ignored Colonel Rose's calls to ride together to Deir al-Qamar and persuade the mountain-dwellers 'to stop bloodshed for the sake of humanity'.[59] But then, when the Druze gained control at the end of November, the roles reversed. Bourée's calls for joint action were dismissed by 'the senior British officers [with] an unusual reserve'.[60] After Necib Paşa's irregular (paramilitary) Druze army arrived, adding to the miseries of the Christian victims of the war, the French agents described the grim situation and lack of cooperation between the Powers as 'a blatant abandonment of the rights of justice and humanity'.[61] Bourée even suggested an armed European intervention in Syria, but Rose objected, reckoning that such an intervention could jeopardize Britain's advantageous position in Lebanon.[62]

The consuls of the five European Great Powers acted together only after Grand Emir Bashir Qasim, a Catholic Maronite, was captured and tortured by Nakad sheikhs in December. The consuls believed that Ottoman authorities purposely refrained from intervening and stopping the violence, and disarmed the Christians in certain districts.[63] The Ottoman paşas, for their part, accused the European agents of triggering violence for their immediate interests and denied accusations of indifference.[64]

A war of blame thus started while violence was still ongoing. Anxious that the Powers might intervene again, the Porte invested *serasker* Mustafa Nuri Paşa, another conservative figure, with extraordinary powers, and dispatched him to Syria to suppress the fighting. But, before his arrival, by the end of December, the war had ended—with 1,460 casualties (the majority of these were the Druze, and 390 Maronites), tens of villages and the silk and mulberry harvests pillaged, and over 4,000 houses burnt down. The material cost was estimated at half a million pounds.[65]

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As soon as Mustafa Paşa landed in Beirut, the Ottoman *serasker* found himself on the receiving end of the narrative war. According to the inhabitants of the mountain, both Maronite and Druze, what had happened in the autumn had been a renewal of ancient quarrels (referring to the 1820s and 1830s) and a continuation of existing blood feuds and vendettas (*kan davası*).[66] Both the

[59] Bouyrat, *La France*, 302; Bourée to Guizot, 22 Oct. 1841, *DDC* vol. 7, 34.
[60] Bourée to Guizot, 28 Nov. 1841, *DDC* vol. 7, 52.
[61] Pontois to Guizot, 23 Nov. 1841, AMAE CP Turquie 284; cf. Bouyrat, *La France*, 310.
[62] Ibid. 309.
[63] 'Les consuls généraux des cinq puissances a Beyrouth à S.E. Selim Pacha, seraskier de Syrie et gouverneur de Sayda', 30 Nov. 1841, *DDC* vol. 7, 54.
[64] BOA i.MSM 75/2152. [65] Rizk, *Mont Liban*, 110–11. [66] Gökbilgin, 'Cebel', 649.

Maronites and the Druze were discontent with the rule of Bashir Qasim III. The Druze wanted a replacement and declared that they would approve any Muslim, including a Turkish paşa, to be the new ruler of the mountain in place of a Maronite. The Maronites, on the other hand, suggested a Shihab grand emir, even if not necessarily the current grand emir, Bashir Qasim III, who was unpopular among a majority of their coreligionists due to his lack of charisma and poor health. In their view, there was nobody other than the Shihabs who could maintain order in the mountain except the pro-Egyptian Amir Arslan.[67]

Mustafa Paşa's mission signified the position of the Porte and the Ottoman authorities' eagerness to impose their direct rule in Lebanon. Only by this means, the *serasker* believed, could the allegedly irreconcilable demands of the mountain-dwellers be transcended, the mutual blaming between Maronites and the Druze brought to an end, and the 'provocations of European consuls'—which, in his view, stirred up violence among the Lebanese in the first place—be fended off.

As a result, Mustafa resolved, at the demand of both parties, to remove Bashir Qasim Shihab from his post as grand emir due to his ineffectiveness. He sent the latter into exile in Istanbul (13 January 1842).[68] Two days later, while European diplomats and most of those on the mountain were expecting the appointment of another Shihab as the new grand emir, the *serasker* proclaimed Ömer Paşa—alias Michel Lattas, an Ottoman officer of Austro-Hungarian (Croatian) origin—as the interim governor of Mount Lebanon for his experience in dealing with similar 'disturbances' in the Balkans.[69]

According to Mustafa, with the dispatch of a few warships that would blockade the coasts of Beirut and Sidon to prevent 'foreign aid' (*ecnebi yardımı*) and a number of Albanian soldiers—albeit notorious for their unruliness—as well as with the disarmament of the mountaineers and the payment of indemnities to the Christians (for 1840 rebellion and the 1841 civil war), order and tranquillity could be brought to Lebanon.[70]

The new Istanbul regime thus brought down its fist on the mountain, and ended the centuries-long Shihab era, and the age of the grand emirs in Lebanon. It came as a bombshell to many—the Maronites, the European consuls, and particularly the French, who were the historical protectors of the Maronites and the main European beneficiary of Shihab rule. The French ambassador to Istanbul, François-Adolphe Bourqueney, objected that this was a counteroffensive for the Porte to establish direct rule, and a patient 'anti-European', and 'anti-reformist' conspiracy run by the conservative cabinet to neutralize the 1839 Edict.[71] The

[67] Ibid. 649–50. [68] BOA A.DVN.10/84/1.
[69] BOA HR.SFR.3 3/63; BOA HR.SFR.3 3/64; Nesselrode to Titov, 22 Mar. 1843, BOA HR.SYS 912/1/48; Harik, *Politics*, 266.
[70] Gökbilgin, 'Cebel', 650. [71] Boyrat, *La France*, 315.

other European ambassadors did not react as strongly in the beginning, giving Ömer, the interim governor, the benefit of the doubt.

However, from the very beginning, it proved almost impossible for Ömer to assert his authority over the Christians and gain the trust of the Powers' agents, due to his lack of refinement and magnanimity. His immediate actions instantly riled everyone. In line with his religious inclinations, he circulated petitions for the expulsion of British (Protestant) missionaries from Lebanon and removed a number of Christian officials from office. He returned the sequestered lands of those Druze sheikhs, such as the Nakads of Deir al-Qamar, who had been deprived of their lands under Bashir Qasim's rule and who were known by the European consuls to be guilty of inhumane crimes during the 1841 civil war. And he renounced his direct authority over the *'muqatas* of the leading Druze houses such as the Jumblatts. All these were seen as signs of his overt anti-Christianism and endorsement of the Druze. The Maronite clergy and peasantry claimed that, in order to justify his actions, Ömer had urged local Christians to sign petitions in favour of his rule, threatening them with exclusion from the payment of indemnities to be made by the Druze for the losses in 1841.[72]

If anything, what transpired under Ömer's rule was the complete opposite of the system pledged by the 1839 Edict. Like Grand Vizier İzzet and Mustafa Paşa, Ömer's main concern was not to enact reforms, but to establish order and sovereignty in Syria by using Islam as a rhetorical tool and eliminating any foreign interference and local allegiance to the European empires. In this specific sense, the French agents were not entirely wrong in suspecting the Porte's intentions, and neither were the Lebanese Christians in worrying for their future.

The latter sent petition after petition to Istanbul over the following months to complain about their treatment by Ömer. In response, the Porte dispatched a commissioner (the former governor of Morea, Selim Bey) to observe for himself Ömer's rule. Along with him, ulemas were sent to Syria in March and April 1842 to convert the Druze to Sunni Islam (with the purpose of recruiting them in the army in due course) or at least to discipline them. And then Ömer began to urge the Druze to make their due indemnity payments to the Maronites, who had asked for a much higher amount anticipating that it would later be reduced. All these alienated the Druze within just three months of Ömer coming to power. Now exasperated by the demands for payment of what they considered unjust indemnities (also because it was the Maronites, they believed, that had started the war), the Druze also turned against Ottoman rule, refused to obey the orders of the interim governor, and ignored his calls for the payment of any tax.[73]

[72] BOA HR.SFR.3 2/8; Rose to Canning, 30 July 1842, BOA HR.SYS 912/1/64; Wood to Ponsonby, 4 May 1842, SAMECO Box 5, File 1; Bouyrat, *La France*, 312–13.

[73] Farah, *Politics*, 218–26; Gökbilgin, 'Cebel', 653–4; Bourée to Guizot, 7 May 1842, *DDC* vol. 7, 128; [?] to Reverend Clark, 16 Mar. 1870, ABCFM vol. 6, Syria, 291/368.

Ömer responded to Druze disobedience by arresting their leaders during an invitation to his palace. After the civil war, Numan Jumblatt had retired himself from all worldly affairs and devoted his life to religion and spiritualism. His younger brother, Said, assumed the leadership of the family. On 7 April 1842, the latter rode to the paşa's residence along with Arslan, Nakad, Talhuq, and Al-Malik sheikhs. When they descended from their horses, on a signal given by Ömer, the great gates of the palace were shut, its meidan was filled with the paşa's troops, and 'the Dru[z]e chiefs were taken like mice in a trap'.[74] A few days later Numan, despite his retirement, and other Druze chiefs were also detained for having refused to pay indemnities to the Christians.[75] Hoping to save their sheikhs, the Druze mobilized but were swiftly crushed by the Ottoman forces.

In the past, such imperial repression would have allowed the Porte to maintain its rule and ensure the payment of tributes until the locals wielded enough power to disobey the sultans again. But now, after its successive defeats at the hands of Mehmed Ali, and after the restoration of its rule in Syria with the aid of the Powers and the 1840 intervention, the standing of Istanbul before local eyes had been weakened. Ömer's inept policies had damaged even more the trust of the Lebanese, Druze or Christian, in the Porte.

More importantly, now the Lebanese felt the support of the European Powers behind them. The sultan's agents and intermediaries no longer had the monopoly over security and violence in the country. The European consuls in Beirut, Tripoli, Latakia, and Damascus considered it appropriate to repeatedly complain that Mustafa and Ömer Paşas were not 'consulting' them before taking decisions over the future of the mountain. For their part, those living on the mountain looked to the European actors on the spot for protection. Numan Jumblatt asked for British help to obtain release from detention.[76] The French consul in Beirut, Bourée, mediated between the Druze and the Maronites to foster a coalition against the Porte, conjure the patriarch to 'forget past quarrels and agree to a renewal of the Maronite-Druze union', and put an end to the common ruin. And he succeeded for the time being.[77]

The Jumblatts were eager to join forces with the Maronites. They even promised to accept the restoration of Shihabi rule and the compensation of the losses incurred during the 1841 conflict.[78] Ömer Paşa's method of rule created so much consternation and opposition that, in the end, the consuls of the Powers also set aside their competition, and agreed to request from the Ottoman authorities the demission of Ömer and the re-establishment of Shihab rule under Bashir II or Bashir Qasim.

[74] 'Syria', *The Times*, 14 May 1842; Bourée to Guizot, 7 Apr. 1842, *DDC* vol. 7, 36.
[75] Rose to Canning, 10 Apr. 1842, TNA FO 226/29.
[76] Rose to Canning, 6 May 1842, TNA FO 226/24/36.
[77] Bourée to Guizot, 7 May 1842, *DDC* vol. 7, 128. [78] Ibid.

But Mustafa Paşa turned down these claims on the grounds that under the Shihabs, Lebanon had become a site of violence and terror. Their return would be 'against humanity'.[79] The direct rule Mustafa established in Lebanon was a triumph of conservative ministers. But it proved short-lasting. A hitherto unseen diplomatic intervention in the mountain terminated it before the year had ended.

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In February 1842, the Powers came up with a plan for the administrative reorganization of the Lebanon in lieu of the Porte's scheme for direct rule. It originated from one of the few representatives of the so-called Congress system generation still around: Prince Metternich. His idea was to cut Mount Lebanon in half along

Map 4. Lebanon

[79] Bourée to Guizot, 26 Apr. 1842, *DCC* vol. 7, 38.

geographical lines. Taking the Damascus–Beirut road as the dividing border, the north, inhabited by the Maronites, would be ruled by a Maronite *kaymakam* (district governor); the south, albeit a demographically more mixed region with Druze, Greek Orthodox, Greek Catholic, Maronite, and Metuwali inhabitants, would be placed under the authority of a Druze. The two *kaymakams* would report to a Shihab grand emir.

The premise of Metternich's idea was that Maronite and Druze inhabitants of Lebanon were practically incapable of coexistence.[80] In the European imperial gaze, one way to prevent further violence between them was to separate these people administratively. Even though the Porte exhibited a similar degree of imperialist scorn towards the Lebanese, from the outset the sultan's men objected to the plan, because, on the one hand, they strove to avoid another European diplomatic intervention in their empire's domestic affairs. On the other, they considered the plan far-fetched due to the mixed population of the southern part of the country. It was impossible to separate these 'hostile' populations from one another. The Lebanese, for their part, hardly welcomed Metternich's plan because of its ambiguous nature, which did not at all address their immediate differences with respect to rights, privileges, and property.

However, the five European Powers persevered in the implementation of the plan, conceiving of their role as a buffer between the 'Sunni Islamist' policies of the Porte's agents and their co-religionists (the Lebanese Christians) and protégés (the Druze) in need of protection. Throughout 1842, at several ambassadorial conferences convened in Istanbul, the plan was discussed and repeatedly proposed to Ottoman ministers. When the Porte resisted accepting it, Metternich reminded the former of the imperative of reinstating the Shihabs as the ruler of the mountain so as to be able to 'have the satisfaction of… Europe… By this means, and by this means only, the Sublime Porte will be spared very great *embarrassment*.' He alluded to—nay, admonished the Porte with a threat of—potential armed intervention that would overrule the sultan's authority in the Levant.[81] Ten days later, the Russian foreign minister, Nesselrode, used the very same language—the 1840 intervention was a friendly 'assistance' to the sultan and the Lebanese.[82] According to Nesselrode, the sacrifices made at the time would justify another intervention on the part of the Powers, which 'could not remain indifferent to the prosperity or the ruin of [the Syrian] populations'.[83]

European pressure on the Porte mounted every month. At the ambassadorial conference of 27 May 1842, the Ottoman foreign minister, Sarim Efendi, was reminded that '[b]y delaying in fulfilling the wishes of the Powers, the Sublime Porte gains nothing… but instead exposes itself… to dangers which from one day

[80] N. Moore to [?], 31 May 1844, AMAE 50MD/43/94.
[81] Stürmer to Testa, 10 Mar. 1842, BOA HR. SYS 912/2/33. Emphasis mine.
[82] Nesselrode to Titow, 22 Mar. 1842, BOA HR. SYS 912/2/48. [83] Ibid.

to the next can become real…'[84] When Sarim argued against Metternich's idea, maintaining that partition was 'impracticable because the Druzes and the Maronites live mixed together in the same villages', it was pointed out to him that 'this mixture only occurred in two or three districts, but that the greater portion of the Druzes and of the Maronites inhabit separate districts'.[85] Despite his repeated protests, Sarim was silenced.

What is important here is not simply how the Powers kept the Porte at bay, but that the exchanges between the Powers' agents and the Porte, and the Lebanese rejection of Metternich's plan, were a quintessential example of the dialogical yet nonetheless top-down, hierarchical, and transimperial patterns of supplying security in the Levant at the time. Despite all their differences, virtually none of the Lebanese peoples accepted the partition of the mountain nor the single-handed reterritorialization—a practice that would be frequently repeated in the twentieth-century Middle East with comparably disastrous results.[86]

The reports of European consuls in Syria who were better acquainted with local experiences expose the blatancy of Metternich's plan. The British consul in Damascus, Richard Wood, insightfully explained in early May 1842 that the division of authority in Mount Lebanon was 'likely to lead to future contests for supremacy between [the Druze and the Maronites], and consequently to bloodshed and disorder'. He explained that the plan was 'scarcely practicable'; its accomplishment would be very difficult because of 'the pretended feudal rights of the Druze and Christian chiefs over some of the *muqatas* or districts', which had in effect become obsolete. Moreover, there were Christian feudal lords with mostly Druze tenants. '[T]o the south, the Lords of the manor are mostly Druzes, but a great portion of the peasants are Christians. In both cases many of the peasants have landed property and hold tenements which it cannot be expected they will either abandon or transfer.'[87]

In response, the British ambassador to Istanbul, Stratford Canning, acknowledged that there were some '*difficulties of detail*' in the application of the plan but these 'nonetheless should not stop the adoption of a measure in other respects satisfactory'—a tragic testament to how decisions over the future of the people who lived their own realities in the distant (Levant) were made in the metropoles.[88]

To be fair, leaving aside the Powers' desire to immediately resolve the Lebanese issue, beneath the blatancy of European imperial actions were several other pressing concerns. Imperial anxieties had been whipped up by news from different

[84] M. Titow to M. George Kirico, 3 June 1842, BOA HR. SYS 912/2/59.
[85] Conference at Constantinople 29 May 1842, SAMECO Box 5, File 1.
[86] Rose to Canning, 30 July 1842, BOA HR. SYS 912/2/64; Rose to Aberdeen, 25 July 1842; SAMECO Box 5, File 1.
[87] Wood to Canning, 4 May 1842, SAMECO Box 5, File 1.
[88] Canning to Pisani, 26 Aug. 1842, BOA HR. SYS 912/2/79. Emphasis mine. See also Makdisi, *Culture*, 78–9; Said, 'Blind Arrogance'.

parts of Syria and especially from Lebanon with regards to the mounting 'Islamism' of the İzzet Paşa government and the conduct of the unruly Albanian regiments. That the Ottoman Albanians were involved in excesses, plundered churches, assaulted priests, and abused consuls in different, but mainly Christian, parts of the country led the Powers to compel the sultan's agents in Istanbul, London, and Vienna to agree to Metternich's plan. The Porte's diplomats in Europe, Âli Efendi and Akif Bey, daily reported back and warned Istanbul of the possibility of an armed intervention.[89]

In the end, the Porte's defiance was broken down on account of three factors. The first was the cabinet change in August 1842, when the hardline conservative İzzet Paşa was replaced by the moderate conservative Rauf Paşa as grand vizier. The second was the eruption of Druze resistance led by Shibli al-Aryan, who attacked Ömer's palace and embarrassed the paşa in a smaller-scale civil war. Thirdly, there was the emergence of conflicts on the Serbian and Wallachia borders. The French ambassador, Bourqueney, advised the Porte that it would be to its benefit to make sacrifices in Lebanon for the resolution of the crisis in the Balkans in the sultan's favour.[90]

The Ottoman ministers stepped back, choosing the lesser of two evils, as they saw it. Still they would not accept a Shihab ruler. They suspected that the mixed areas would pose serious problems for the stability of Lebanon. But they gradually agreed, from October 1842 onward, first, to partition the country into Maronite and Druze sub-governorships (*kaymakamlık*), and sent the able and moderate Esad Paşa as the new governor of Sidon to oversee the new system; then, to recall unruly Albanian troops; then, to dismiss Ömer, restore the plundered property of the Maronites; finally, to concede the ancient privileges of the Lebanese with respect to religion (free exercise of worship) and taxation.[91]

After a series of conferences in Istanbul over the next two months, the representatives of the Powers and the Porte agreed on the dual-*kaymakamlık* system. With the new system, each *kaymakam* would come from a senior Maronite or Druze families, and would report to the Ottoman governor in Sayda. The fate of the mixed areas in the south were to be considered by the men on the spot, Esad and the European consuls. The Powers accepted the Porte's one major condition: the Shihabs were excluded from the Lebanese administration.

Ottoman Foreign Minister Sarim Efendi announced the final decision of the Porte in favour of the new system on 7 December 1842. His statement included his

> deepest regret that this question has given rise to so many discussions and talks over the past year . . . The Sublime Porte moved nonetheless by the feelings of

[89] Kaynar, *Mustafa Reşit*, 431; Kodaman, *Les Ambassades*, 174–5.
[90] Gökbilgin, 'Cebel', 657–8.
[91] Rose to Aberdeen, 27 Sept. 1842, Aberdeen to Canning, 24 Oct. 1842, SAMECO Box 5, File 1.

> respect . . . to the five Powers, its dearest friends and allies, [and] preferred to arrive at the solution of a very delicate question, which was at the same time one of its internal affairs, by complying with [the Powers'] wishes rather than to refuse [them],

because they tended 'only to the same object: the re-establishment of good order in the Mountain'.[92] Sarim was worried not only about the plan's ill-designed foundations but also about having to concede to the Powers' collective domination, which could pave the way for similar interference in the future.[93] Canning consoled him:

> Any feeling of regret which could mingle with that of [your] satisfaction because of certain doubts that [the Porte] seems to have conceived for the future, is effaced by the conviction that the success, as well as the execution, of the measure will depend mainly on the Porte itself.[94]

It was now all in the Porte's hands to successfully implement a plan it had fervently opposed. Russian Ambassador Butenev similarly assured Sarim that all the measures taken could 'certainly not fail' to ensure the maintenance of tranquillity and well-being of Lebanon.[95] But, as we will see below, they did fail—immensely.

As a local scribe, Husayn Abu al-Hassan of Zahle, wrote in *c.*1842, Mount Lebanon would never be the same again. 'The old days' of the *muqatadjis*, the peaceful coexistence of the Maronites and the Druze in their manors, had 'now passed'. A new era was coming 'like racing clouds'.[96]

The Racing Clouds: The Stand-Off and the Civil War of 1845

If the persistent discrepancy between the policies adopted in the European metropoles and their reception and flawed implementation in the Levant was one of the defining characteristics of transimperial security culture in the nineteenth century, another was the fact that this culture reproducted insecurities both for the Levantines and, often indirectly, for the European imperial actors themselves. However much goodwill it might have embodied, Metternich's dual-*kaymakamlık* plan, or the diplomatic intervention of 1842, did not appease the

[92] Sarim Effendi to Baron de Bourqueney, 7 Dec. 1842, AMAE CP 133/286.
[93] Boutenieff to Hamjiery, 18 Nov. 1842, BOA HR. SYS 912/2/80; Canning to Sarim, 14 Dec. 1842, BOA HR. SYS 912/2/44.
[94] Ibid. [95] Boutenieff to Sarim Efendi, 15 Dec. 1842, BOA HR. SYS 912/2/4.
[96] Isa Iskandar al Ma'luf, *Tarikh Madinat Zahlah* (Zahlah: Matba'at Zahlah al Fatat, 1911), 203; cf. Harik, *Politics*, 48.

various communities in the mountain. All practices in the name of security and order were undertaken in such an injudicious manner that in the end they proved ever more troublesome for local peace. They complicated existing problems, created new ones, and kindled inter-imperial rivalries, both among the Powers and between the Powers and the Porte.

After the arrival of the sultan's moderate agent Esad Paşa, the Jumblatt brothers Said and Numan were released from prison in November 1842. The two had harboured hopes of being chosen the *kaymakam* of the 'Druze country' in the belief that they were the strongest family in the mountain, both economically and in terms of their manpower. But Numan and Said were caught in a disagreement with each other over sharing their four *'muqatas*, which created a lasting schism within the family.[97] This tarnished their reliability, particularly that of the hot-headed 19-year-old Said.

In January 1843, Esad Paşa put the Metternich plan into action even though the official announcements were made in March. Ömer was dismissed, the Maronite Amir Haydar Abu'l Lama was appointed by Esad, and the Druze emir, Ahmed Arslan, was elected by the Druze as the *kaymakams* of their respective districts in the Maronite north and the Druze south.[98] The new *kaymakams* were nominated in concord with the hierarchical system of the ancient feudal order. The Abu'l Lama and Arslan families were both *hakim* families which came just after the Shihabs in the feudal hierarchy pyramid, which signified that Metternich's plan was, to a degree, an elitist attempt to accommodate the ancient feudal order. However, the incongruity between the ancient and the new prevented its proper implementation.

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As had been predicted by both Ottoman and European agents on the spot, the main problem with the plan was the mixed districts that fell under the authority of the Druze *kaymakam*. The moderate Esad Paşa, European consuls, the *kaymakams* Haydar and Ahmed, the *muqatadjis*, the Maronite clergy, and the Christian peasants had to work out what to do with the administration of those predominantly Maronite (or Christian) mixed villages, in such regions as Deir al-Qamar (where the 1841 civil war had begun) or the Shuf, the heart of the Jumblatts' *'muqatas*.

The plan had left unaddressed the exact questions that they were now bound to answer—would the mountain be divided along 'geographical lines'? This would mean that the mixed villages in the south would remain under the jurisdiction of the Druze *kaymakam*. Or would the division be made along 'sectarian lines'? Then the Maronite *kaymakam* in the north, Amir Haydar, would be responsible for the Maronites in the south, which would violate the ancient rights of the Druze feudal

[97] Gökbilgin, 'Cebel', 670. [98] BOA HR.SFR.3 4/34.

chiefs over their '*muqatas*.[99] All these questions sparked new debates, brought forth new categories like 'minorities' into the political lexicon of Syria, and then spiralled into violence again.[100]

Backed by the British consul, Rose, and Said Jumblatt, Esad believed that the involvement of the Maronite *kaymakam* in the affairs of the Maronites in the southern part of the country (or 'the sectarian rule', as they put it) was 'impracticable' because the double authority would become a source of continued ill will due to its violation of the rights of the Druze.[101] It was therefore not in keeping with the 'beneficial and healing' measure that 'the Powers intended' to introduce. They advocated division along 'geographical', not 'sectarian', lines, and proposed securing the rights and property of the 'Christian minorities' of the south by means of Christian *vekils* (representatives) that would be elected by them.[102] These vekils would represent their interests before the *muqatadjis* and, in case of disagreements, or in the event that the Druze lords violated their rights and freedoms, would bring issues to the attention of the Ottoman governor in Sidon. Moreover, a Turkish garrison of the Ottoman paṣa would be stationed in the problematic Deir al-Qamar region to inhibit any unlawful behaviour and violence. The Christians of the mixed villages in the 'Druze country' would thus be placed under the double guarantee of the *vekils* and the paṣa of Sidon. If they should still feel insecure, voluntary emigration to the northern part of the country would be facilitated with reimbursement as well as by the supply of lands and houses of equal value to those they owned in the south.[103]

Even though the partition plan was imposed from above in 1842, those on the mountain itself were eventually listened to by the imperial agents between 1843 and 1845. At the numerous meetings held between Ottoman authorities, European consuls, and Christian and Druze deputies, a majority of the Druze adamantly rejected 'sectarian rule', but reluctantly agreed on the *vekil* system.[104] The Maronite Church kept perfect silence until a final decision over the mixed districts was made in late 1844. The Maronite peasantry, for their part, more than once agreed on having *vekils* and celebrated the option of emigration at the meetings, but then as many times changed their opinion later, declaring that, for their tranquillity and security, '[n]othing will do but one Governor, a Shihab, for both Christians and Druzes'.[105]

Esad and Rose at first could not fathom the Maronite peasantry's wavering. But ultimately they became convinced that a 'wicked scheme' was under way against the plan. The Shihabites, those supporters of the ex-Bashir II, the exiled 'Red

[99] Farah, *Politics*, 256–87. [100] Makdisi, *Culture*, 80.
[101] Rose to Aberdeen, 6 May 1843, *CRAS* 14. [102] Ibid.
[103] Rose to Canning, 30 Apr. 1843; Rose to Aberdeen, 6 May 1843; Rose to Canning, 15 Feb., 3 Mar., 1 Oct. 1844, *CRAS* 14, 17, 34, 40, 94.
[104] Rizk, *Mont Liban*, 114. [105] Rose to Aberdeen, 6 May 1843, *CRAS* 34.

Emir', now residing in Istanbul, were plotting his return to the mountain.[106] According to Rose, the 'Shihab party' prompted the Christians in the mixed regions to reject all guarantees Esad proposed, threatening violent assault against their fellow townsmen.[107]

More than a year passed in this state. In early 1844, Esad grew exasperated by the lack of progress and admitted in despair the unworkability of both plans. He hinted to the European consuls the necessity of re-establishing direct Ottoman rule, but was met with categorical rejection. He then expressed to the Porte his desire to resign.[108] This was an expression of self-criticism during a moment of defeat over the Porte's helpless subordination to the Powers' 'ill will'.

For his part, Rose was equally embittered. He lamented that Metternich's plan was 'foiled . . . by insubordination of the subjects towards the Sovereign'. He candidly asked, if the inhabitants were so stubbornly opposed,

> do not then any moral obligations which induced the Powers to interfere in the government of Mount Lebanon at once cease? . . . Can the Great Powers creditably further interfere? . . . Is it fitting that the [Powers] should be occupied for two or three years, more perhaps, in endeavouring to conciliate the jarring interests and the never-ending hatreds of a semi-barbarous peasantry of a foreign country given up to intrigue and uncharitable partisanship?[109]

Rose's questions signalled the uncertainty as to when and why the Powers could and should intervene, as to whether the legitimacy of interferences lay in the benefits procured for the locals, and as to the willingness of the locals to obtain such benefits by way of foreign aid.

Rose further lamented that the same Christians were now signing petitions for the return of Bashir II and Bashir Qasim, about whose rule they had bitterly complained not long before. But what he did not see was that Christian peasants had not opposed the plan merely under pressure from the Shihabites. Their hopes and expectations as Christians and as peasants had been repeatedly shattered since the time of the Egyptian interregnum, when partial liberties had been introduced to non-Muslims, and especially since the 1840 intervention, during which the aforementioned promises of religious and class rights under the auspices of the Gülhane Edict of 1839 had been delivered by British and Ottoman imperial agents. There was now a haunting sense of insecurity amidst the unpredictability of the obscure intra- and inter-imperial politics. These Christian peasants were troubled by the Porte's 'Islamist' policies under conservative paṣas, the Powers' quest for influence through their co-religionists and proxies, the non-payment of the indemnities of the 1841 civil war by the Druze, and the fact both Christian and

[106] Rose to Canning, 23 Mar. 1844, *CRAS* 44. [107] Rose to Canning, 3 May 1844, *CRAS* 52.
[108] Gökbilgin, 'Cebel', 669–71. [109] Rose to Canning, 25 Mar. 1844, *CRAS* 46–8.

Druze *muqatadjis* were claiming the restoration of their ancient rights, pointing to the same points of references and with the same degree of confidence in the justness of their cause. Finally, they had hardly received any security at all, with their houses burnt, property pillaged, and people killed. It was this immense distrust that brought about their eventual reluctance to agree to Metternich's plan.

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In 1844, the Maronite peasantry once more found a helping hand in France. Since the dreadful experience of the 1841 civil war that had resulted in part from his revisionist policies in the Levant, the French prime and foreign minister, Guizot, had been 'very reserved' about interfering in Lebanese politics again. But now, seeing that Metternich's plan could not be fully implemented, and that the Porte was imposing a patched-together plan on the Christians in the mixed districts, he identified a leeway for just interference and began to openly advocate for the restoration of the Shihabs.[110]

Guizot's apprehension was that, although France was associated with the other Powers in Lebanon, her position as the protector of the Maronites was 'peculiar'.[111] Paris had to act because it was her historical duty, but, of course, a more tangible motivation lay in the fact that the return of the Shihabites would place France's political power in the Levant on its former footing.

To be sure, the French minister followed a more cautious policy with respect to the Eastern Question this time, careful to proceed in concert with the other Powers. He approached Metternich and the British foreign minister, Lord Aberdeen, for a joint agreement for the return of the Shihabs, while demanding from the Porte the immediate implementation of the indemnities of the 1841 war.[112] Ambassadorial conferences began again in Istanbul to decide upon the future of Mount Lebanon. Metternich received the French suggestion positively. London, on the other hand, opposed the withdrawal of the plan, as it would go against the interests of the Druze. A Catholic/non-Catholic schism unfolded among the Powers when Russia and Prussia sided with Britain, albeit with much less enthusiasm.[113]

Soon after the Porte announced its final decision to implement the *vekil* system in the mixed villages in November 1844, encouraged by France, the Maronite Patriarch Hubaysh broke his silence and announced his opposition to the plan to side with the Christian peasantry.[114] In fact, the hardline bishop Tobia 'Awn had already begun campaigning for the Shihab cause.

[110] Guizot to Bourqueney, 13 Apr. 1844, AMAE CP Turquie 291; cf. Bouyrat, *La France*, 341.
[111] Bouyrat, *La France*, 342; Rose to Aberdeen, 3 Nov. 1844, TNA FO 226/90/65.
[112] Desages to Bourqueney, 18 Dec. 1844, AMAE 60PAAP/37/106.
[113] Rose to Aberdeen, 3 Nov. 1844, TNA FO 226/90/65.
[114] Rose to Aberdeen, 30 Nov. 1844, *CRAS*, 111–12.

Moreover, Archbishop Nicholas Murad, vicar apostolic to Rome representing the Maronites in Europe, had been lobbying for the same cause in Istanbul and Paris.[115] In 1842, he had in his letters to Guizot and Desages portrayed the importance of the restoration of the Shihabs as a means of liberating the oppressed Christians from the yoke of the Porte.[116] In 1844, he changed his strategy and wrote a pamphlet on Maronite–French relations for the attention of the French authorities in which he depicted the Druze as an idolatrous sect. He suggested France, as their 'protectors', could not remain indifferent to the 'pains' of the Maronites, whose 'devotion to France' was 'well known'.[117] He appealed to French hearts, inaugurating a new literature that looked to forge emotional bonds between Mount Lebanon and France. Moreover, the Lazarist, Capuchin, and Franciscan missionaries, many of whom were French subjects, assiduously propagated French influence among the peasantry through their schools and activities, assuring the peasants that 'because we are in the Levant, we are under France'.[118]

These endeavours spawned a great deal of concern on the part of the Porte.[119] The sultan's agents in Paris and London, the former foreign minister, Mustafa Reşid Paşa, and his protégé, Âli Efendi, fretted that the policy France had adopted 'for the Eastern Question . . . is a serious and dangerous mistake'.[120] Mustafa Reşid called Guizot and his agents to reconcile their policies with Britain: their differences were not only weakening the Ottoman Empire but also paving the way for Russian interferences in the Balkans, which could potentially have a boomerang effect and threaten European peace.[121] Differences endured, however, until violence broke out in the mountain once more in April 1845.

The Porte's role was not negligible in the eventual eruption of violence either. It failed to meet French and local demands, as the restitutions of the 1841 war could not be agreed upon among the mountain-dwellers even after a mixed commission consisting of imperial, Christian, and Druze delegates was established specifically for this task. To bolster the position of the sovereign, Grand Admiral Halil Paşa was sent to Beirut with eight warships in a show of authority and power in April 1844, and the exasperated Esad was replaced with the conservative Vecihi Paşa in April 1845.[122] But the sultan's men could not establish their authority over the Lebanese.[123] This became all the more difficult when Rıza Paşa, another hardline conservative, became grand vizier, and showed great antagonism to

[115] Bouyrat, *La France*, 342.
[116] Nicolas Murad to Desages, 27 Sept. 1842, AMAE 60PAAP/41/365.
[117] Nicholas Murad, *Notice historique sur l'origine de la nation Maronite et sur ses rapports avec la France, sur la nation Druze et sur les diverses populations du Mont Liban* (Paris: Adrien le Claire, 1844), 3, 20, 32, 34, 35.
[118] Moore to Rose, 4 Dec. 1844, TNA FO 226/20/62.
[119] Kodaman, *Les Ambassades*, 182.
[120] 'Notes sur la condition des Rayas sur le Ministre de Riza Pacha, conversation entre Rechid Pacha et M. Ali', 29 Feb. 1844, AMAE MD Turquie 45/59.
[121] Ibid.; Kaynar, *Mustafa Reşit*, 63–6; Kodaman, *Les Ambassades*, 184.
[122] BOA i.MSM. 44/1143.
[123] BOA C.DH. 110/5494/2/1, 27 June 1844.

Anglo-French intervention and little sensitivity to the demands of the sultan's non-Sunni subjects.[124]

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By the spring of 1845, Franco-Austrian (Catholic) diplomatic initiatives for the return of Bashir II had been repeatedly blocked by the Porte, Britain, Russia, and Prussia. The Christian (Maronite) peasantry of the mixed villages rallied behind the Shihabites and resolved to fight. Secret committees were formed. Plans to attack mixed villages in Deir al-Qamar and the Jumblatts' lands were made. Some 11,000 soldiers were assembled. Funds, even those donated by the French and the Austrians for relief for the 1841 war, were channelled for ammunition. French flags were purchased from the French consul to Beirut, Eugène Poujade, for a taxed price. These were all orchestrated from Istanbul by Bashir II Shihab. The mountain was humming with rumours of French ships bringing troops—a rumour that Poujade purposely started—to aid the Maronites.[125]

In response, the Druze *muqatadjis* also began their preparations for war. Under the leadership of the Jumblatts, they held secret meetings at Mukhtara, and agreed to forget their past (Jumblatt–Yazbaki) feuds and act together to fend off the aspirations of the peasantry and the Shihab.[126] What would transpire soon was not a fully fledged sectarian civil war: the Maronite *muqatadjis* remained neutral, in the belief that the toppling of the Druze lords would make them the next target.[127]

The showdown began during the end of April and beginning of May 1845, just after the Ottoman grand admiral had sailed back to the imperial capital.[128] Maronite peasants attacked first the two Shufs that were under Jumblatt rule, and then the *muqata* of the Nakads in Deir al-Qamar. They burned 13 villages in a few hours. With French flags hoisted in their hands and promises of French military support in their minds, they declared that 'one or the other must leave the country; we cannot exist together; it must end in war; [either] they, the Druzes, or we must be destroyed and leave the country.'[129]

Acting as one with the other Druze chiefs, Said Jumblatt declared his allegiance to the sultan and ordered his men to rise up and fall upon the Christians.[130] This was a war of 'supremacy', a war of 'extermination', the Maronite patriarch told European consuls, not a common war. [131] It quickly spilled over 18 different sites. And, as had happened in 1841 and would happen again in 1860, thanks to their numerical superiority, the Maronites gained the upper hand at first and then,

[124] 'Notes sur la condition des Rayas sur le Ministre de Riza Pacha, conversation entre Rechid Pacha et M. Ali', 29 Feb. 1844, AMAE MD Turquie 45/59.
[125] Farah, *Politics*, 375–7.
[126] Ibid. 376; BOA HR.MKT 3/73/2/1.
[127] Farah, *Politics*, 376.
[128] Thomson to Anderson, 7 June 1845, ABCFM vol. 3, Syria 176/14.
[129] Rose to Canning, 30 July 1845 TNA FO 226/20/82; see also Farah, *Politics*, 381.
[130] Rose to Aberdeen, 12 June 1845, TNA FO 78/619/39.
[131] Rose to Aberdeen, 8 June 1845, TNA FO 78/619/37.

lacking the discipline and stamina which their opponents possessed in abundance, they were repelled from the Druze districts, and pushed back to the Maronite north.

When the Druze offensive on the Christians began, the Maronite Church, the French, and the Austrian agents accused Ottoman forces of supporting the Druze, blocking the Maronites' routes when they were on an offensive, receiving a certain part of the Christian plunder by the Druze, and even participating in the Druze's 'great cruelty'. The European consuls collectively called Governor Vecihi to suppress the violence.[132] Yet, Ottoman sources suggest otherwise. According to these, in many instances, Ottoman forces had stopped massacres in villages by intervening at the last minute, although they were 'unable' to prevent the violence due to lack of men and sources, Ottoman commanders and Vecihi claimed.[133] They also maintained that they endeavoured to discipline both sects (*terbiyelerine kalkışıldığı gibi*) despite the conflicting demands of the British and French consuls.[134]

Discerning whose account was true(r) is an almost impossible task. But what matters here is the fact that inter-imperial rivalries persisted even during the clashes, and worked against the order and tranquillity of the mountain. After a month of fighting, around 1,500– 3,000 people, including a French priest and an Ottoman sergeant, had perished. A large majority of the casualties were Druze (double the Maronites). Some 5000–10,000 houses were burnt or pillaged.[135] Violence was suppressed at the end of May 1845 with the arrival of Ottoman reinforcements, and the efforts of Vecihi and Rose, the elders of the mountain, and those clergy of all sects who were intent on peace. But tensions lingered.

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When the violence was over, with the purpose of preventing the recurrence of war, Bashir II Shihab was transferred from Istanbul to Safranbolu, whence his influence over the mountain would be greatly curtailed. In the meanwhile, Vecihi Paşa looked to settle peace between the Lebanese sects (*taifeteyn araları bulunduktan*) the 'Ottoman way'.[136] In his meetings with the delegates from the mountain, he blamed European diplomats for their 'mischievous interference' and urged the Druze and the Maronites to cooperate with the Ottoman authorities, rely on Ottoman troops alone for security and protection instead of their own arms, and avoid any conspiratorial activities with the consuls. He also followed the old

[132] Copy of letter by Hugh Rose, L. D. Wildenbruck, C. Basily, Eugene Poujade, and George Lausella to Vecihi Pasha, 17 May 1845, TNA FO 78/619/44.
[133] Farah, *Politics*, 385–92; Rose to Canning, 17 May 1845, TNA FO 78/619/44.
[134] BOA A.MKT.MHM. 1/73/24, 25 June 1845. [135] Farah, *Politics*, 398.
[136] BOA A.MKT.MHM. 1/73/2, 1 July 1845.

tradition of oblivion, inviting the Lebanese to 'forgive and forget' what had happened (*mazi mâ mazi demek*).[137]

When Shihabite agitation continued after the war, signalling the importance attached to the Lebanon and recognizing the inter-imperial nature of the conflict, the Porte sent its foreign minister, Mustafa Şekib Efendi, to Beirut in July 1845 as extraordinary envoy for the administrative reorganization of the country and to establish order and tranquillity.[138] Şekib's decisions were guided by the new, moderate imperial cabinet that had risen after the fall of the staunch conservative Rıza Paşa due to the unsettled affairs in Syria and the Balkans, and as a result of palace intrigues in Istanbul.[139] In his place, Mustafa Reşid Paşa, the ambassador to Paris, was appointed as the new grand vizier.[140]

The return of Mustafa Reşid to Ottoman government is of considerable importance for at least two reasons. First, as we have seen in the second part of this book, Reşid was the very man that had spearheaded the economic and (together with Hüsrev) diplomatic opening of the Ottoman Empire to freer trade and foreign interventions, showing an unwavering trust in the Vienna order. But the experience in Lebanon, which had been a battleground for the Porte to fight for its sovereign authority since 1840, had shown to him that, once allowed, the Powers' interference in the politics of the Levant could not be contained—a lesson that he had learned too late. Before Reşid left Paris for his new post in Istanbul, he therefore reminded Guizot that in order to 'secure peace' in Mount Lebanon, European consuls had to 'cease their interference in the internal affairs' of the empire.[141]

Second, together with Sultan Abdülmecid and a generation of Naqshbandi–Mujaddidi network, he had initiated the proclamation of the Gülhane Edict and the early *Tanzimat* reforms, some of which had been withdrawn, if not reversed, by the hardline Anglophobic conservatives since 1841. It was after his return to Istanbul, and through Şekib Efendi, that the propositions of the Gülhane Edict were finally, albeit imperfectly, projected onto Lebanon, which had by now become an intricate contact zone of colonial ambitions, conservative Ottoman imperialism, class and sectarian differences, financial disputes, and enduring familial hostilities, such as that between the Shihabs and the Jumblatts.

Although Şekib had come from Istanbul with a plan in hand, he adjusted it in conjunction with local realities while also keeping in view, to a degree, the erstwhile promises of rights to be accorded to the Christians and peasantry and the pledges of privileges to be restored to the *muqatadjis*—both resulting from the

[137] BOA A.MKT.MHM. 1/73/15, 30 June 1845; see also Farah, *Politics*, 401.
[138] BOA i.MSM. 45/1155.
[139] BOA A.MKT.MHM 1/73.
[140] *'Explications sur la chute de Riza Pacha et celle de son collègue Saffet Pacha', par le Docteur Barrachin, Apôtre de l'émancipation des Chrétiens et des Israelites d'Orient* (Athens: Imprimerie de N. Angelidis, 1845), AMAE 50MD/45/66, 2, 17.
[141] Farah, *Politics*, 424.

1840 intervention. The end product, *Règlements de Şekib Efendi*, setting out the new administrative structure, proved accordingly to be a very composite system.

Announced on 15 October 1845, the new regulations preserved the dual-*kaymakamlık* arrangement along geographical lines in order to mute any Shihabite initiative, and refrained from tactlessly imposing direct Ottoman rule—although Russia and Austria were now endorsing this option (Metternich had changed his mind for the third time)—so as not to provoke Great Power pressures, as had happened in 1842.[142]

Şekib established tribunals in each district with an equal number of representatives and judges from each sect in the problematic mixed south.[143] The *vekils* represented the Christians in the mixed districts. Moreover, a *müdür* (responsible official) was appointed for each sub-district to respond to the *kaymakams* who would respond to the governor of Sayda. Finally, the Ottoman foreign minister designated the Deir al-Qamar region as a neutral zone, appointing a military officer to supervise its affairs. With the purpose of ensuring the workability of these regulations, he issued a general pardon to those who were not involved in deliberate murders or engaged in acts of plunder, allocated the Christians 10,000 purses for losses incurred during the 1841 civil war, and strictly ordered the two *kaymakams* to avoid seeking European protection at any time and intervening with each other's districts. These measures were complemented by an arduous process of disarmament in the mountain.

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This was the *Tanzimat* order—an amalgam of the Ottoman principle of the 'circle of justice' (Chapter 1), Islamic teachings, and the idea of 'civilization' (Chapter 7)—that paradoxically placed the purportedly 'uncivilized' *muqatadjis* at the heart of the new Lebanese social order, securing (as it had promised) their property. It allocated to the feudal lords the central tasks of policing (security) and tax collection. After the war, both Said and Numan aided the Porte's agents during the punishment of the those who had committed crimes during the civil war and in the settlement of the Maronite–Druze disputes, while communicating to the Porte's agents the Druze demands for 'security and order' (*asayiş ve istirahatimiz*) in place of 'disturbances' (*uygunsuzluklar*).[144]

The *Tanzimat* order succeeded in certain respects. No major sectarian or *muqatadji*–peasant conflict broke out again until 1858. The unsettled tax issues of the country (those living on the mountain had not paid any tax to Istanbul since the restoration) were resolved by an able commissioner (Mehmed Emin Efendi)

[142] Ibid. 425–7.

[143] One exemption was made here. Unlike the other sects, the Metuwalis did not have a judge of their own. The Sunni Muslim judge was to attend to their affairs.

[144] BOA A.MKT.MHM. 1/73/16.

sent by the Porte to Lebanon in 1848, to the satisfaction of the locals.[145] With the tax receipts, the Porte's agents could arrange for the payment of indemnities in three instalments, which were completed in 1848. Rose reported the same year that the system worked 'fine', the tribunals were assembling, and taxes were being distributed justly.[146]

It was, however, a remarkably imperfect order from the outset, as it clipped the wings of the *muqatadjis* by imposing new administrative bodies on them. At the same time, it confined the peasantry under the authority of the *muqatadjis* from which they had been struggling to break free. Ottoman agents in Lebanon had poorly implemented those liberties introduced for non-Muslims intended to strengthen their loyalty to the sultan (such as the entitlement to testify in courts). No less importantly, as Metternich warned Mustafa Reşid in 1845, the Anglo-French rivalry on the spot, which 'posed an immediate threat' to peace in Mount Lebanon, could not be entirely calmed.[147]

This was due largely to the fact that the prime and foreign minister, Guizot, was under immense pressure in the French chamber. The Catholic party and the French conservatives—both in correspondence with the Maronite clergy and the Shihabites—pleaded with him to implement a more dynamic policy in Lebanon, not to yield to Şekib's regulations for the (French) protection of the Maronites, and to uphold the strategic interests of France in the Mediterranean.

Besides this, the Lebanese campaign of forging affective ties with France, which Archbishop Murad had started in 1842, continued during the latter half of the 1840s. In 1847, for example, Bishop Abdullah al-Bustani (1819–83) wrote an emotional plea to 'the women of France,' as mothers, asking them to 'save us from our enemies,' and reminding them that 'our blood mixed with yours is none other than your blood . . . Our children are your children . . . '[148] The Shihabites in Paris blamed the 'Turks' and the Druze for their ruin, depicting a grim picture of the realities of the '*muqatas* of the Druze chiefs, especially the Jumblatts.[149]

In response to these pressures, Guizot sent a commission to Lebanon, which the Porte authorized with the sole purpose of inhibiting France from further agitation. The detailed report on the state of the country prepared by this commission claimed that the allegations of the Shihab and Catholic party were baseless, and 'accredited Ottoman officials with just intentions'. After Amin Shihab, the son of Bashir II, for whose return France had campaigned, converted to Sunni Islam, the Eastern Question began to lose prominence in Guizot's foreign policy.[150]

According to Puryear, this became even more the case when, during Tsar Nicholas I's visit to London in June 1844, the British and Russian authorities

[145] Farah, *Politics*, 476–7. [146] Ibid. 489.
[147] Guizot to Bourqueney, 27 June 1845, BOA HR. TO. 189/20/2. See also Farah, *Politics*, 456.
[148] Abdallah Boustani, *Lettre de Mgr l'Archevêque de Saida* (Paris, 1847), 2–6, 23–4; cf. Arsan, 'Mount Lebanon', 84–5.
[149] Farah, *Politics*, 488–9. [150] Ibid. 488.

agreed on a common pacific policy towards Syria to facilitate peace in the sultan's empire. As Russia declared her support for Britain in the Anglo-French dispute over Tahiti, Guizot did not see much value in standing for the Maronite cause, a stance that could harm France's global interests.[151] Finally, the 1848 revolutions in Europe and the political turmoil in France before the coup d'état of 1851 would render the Eastern Question of secondary importance in Paris for now.

In conclusion, it was during the five-year period between the summers of 1840 and 1845 that the Eastern Question came to inform local realities as much as it was shaped by the agency of the Lebanese. An Ottoman document dated 1847 states that, by the mid-1840s, Lebanon had 'turned into a battlefield' (*meydan-ı ma'reke*) for the rival imperial states, and formed the 'central tier' (*merkez tabakası*) of British and French foreign policies.[152] Indeed, in this period France's revisionist motivations were repeatedly countered by the British-led Quadruple Alliance; and the war for dominant influence in the Levant, which the Powers had not dared to fight among themselves in 1840, was fought on the ground through their local co-religionists and proxies.[153]

The Porte's 'conservative turn' in March 1841 and its subsequent efforts to stave off Great Power interventions rendered the situation in Mount Lebanon all the more complex. The pledges made during the 1840 intervention were not kept, and the promises of the Gülhane Edict were poorly implemented—if they were implemented at all—until 1845. The series of disastrous civil wars in late 1841, 1842, and finally 1845, the abolition of the ancient grand emirate and the introduction of a new dual-*kaymakamlık* system were all the emergent features of a complex set of problems and ambitions. These included the pursuit of imperial influence by various powers, existing and mounting sectarian and class differences among the Lebanese, and the peasants' claims for egalitarian rights which were arguably irreconcilable with the feudal privileges demanded by the *muqatadjis*. All these problems were compacted together in the mountain, bursting out in successive explosions of violence.

Mount Lebanon saw relative (even if not permanent) peace only after 1845, when Russia and Britain formed a common pact for the stability of Syria and France pulled back her active support to the Shihabites. The Porte, for its part, decided under Mustafa Reşid to pursue a pacific policy towards the Powers from then on, hoping to keep their consuls in Beirut content (*hoşnut tutulması*) by means of goodwill (*sûret-i hasene*).[154] The following fifteen years witnessed a rapid bounce back from total chaos to considerable economic prosperity in the mountain. Yet the same period also proved to be a new gestation phase for the most disastrous civil war in Lebanon in the nineteenth century.

[151] Vernon J. Puryear, *England, Russia, and the Straits Question, 1844–1865* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1931), 40–44.

[152] BOA HR.SYS 1527/50/1/1, 20 May 1847.

[153] See Ch. 8.

[154] BOA HR.SYS 1527/50/1/1, 20 May 1847.