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The Two Wars

Crimea and Mount Lebanon

During Tsar Nicholas I's visit to London in June 1844, Russia and Britain not only agreed on taking a common position against France. They also reached a secret verbal agreement over the Eastern Question. The tsar and the British prime minister, Robert Peel, concurred that the sultan's empire was very weak, 'a dying man', as the former said. They decided to cooperate in maintaining her. But 'if in future it became evident that [the Ottoman Empire] could no longer be maintained', the courts of London and St Petersburg would act in concert to draft a preliminary understanding 'on the details of the partition' along with Austria. They purposefully excluded France from the plan because of the tsar's personal dislike of King Louis-Philippe, as well as Russia's policy of separating Britain from France, and their disapproval of the ongoing revisionist aspirations of the Guizot government in the Levant at the time.[1]

One issue remained vague, unaddressed and therefore open to different interpretations between the two courts in the coming years, however. How would one determine the impossibility of maintaining the Ottoman Empire and the time of her partition? On what principles and legal grounds? British and Russian statesmen held contrasting views with respect to these questions. And their differences became one of the most pressing reasons why they were dragged into war a decade later, in 1854–6—the so-called Crimean War, which was actually fought from the Baltic to the East Asia and the Pacific.[2]

The first inter-imperial war amongst the Great Powers since the end of the Napoleonic Wars in 1815, the Crimean War shook the world, devastating peoples, economies, and finances. Some historians argue that it symbolized the destruction of the Concert of Europe.[3] In the following pages I will offer an alternative assessment, and discuss that the Concert continued to exist even after the Crimean War. That being said, the peace established on the heels of the war was delicate, and continued to test peace in Europe and the Levant. Like the

[1] Puryear, *England, Russia*, 40, 51.

[2] Clive Ponting, *The Crimean War* (London: Chatto & Windus, 2004), 5.

[3] Paul W. Schroeder, *Austria, Great Britain, and the Crimean War: The Destruction of the European Concert* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1972); Charles Kupchan, *How Enemies Become Friends: The Sources of Stable Peace* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2010), 237.

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aftershocks of a disastrous earthquake, its aftermath witnessed further Great Power wars, civil strifes, and rebellions.

The precarious climate that emerged at the time dovetailed with existing and newly emerging tensions in Mount Lebanon. These snowballed into further fighting on the mountain during the summer of 1860—a much more devastating conflict, with a death toll around three to five times greater than the civil wars of 1841 and 1845 combined. Here we will consider the global and local dynamics that led once again to violence in Ottoman Lebanon, starting with the new implications of the Eastern Question in the 1850s that prompted the Crimean War, and their unsettling effects in the Levant.

The Crimean War and a Perilous Peace

After the Gülhane Edict of 1839, the Ottoman Sublime Porte's policies of centralization on taxation, codification, and conscription missed their mark. Coupled with growing economic discrepancies between non-Muslims and Muslims, they provoked continuous instability in the Ottoman Empire in the short run. Tax revolts in Akdağ, Niş, Vidin, and Canik were accompanied by violence in Syria at large (Lebanon, Aleppo, Damascus), Mosul, Nablus, Jeddah, Montenegro, Bosnia, and Crete. Moreover, the incessant border quarrels with Persia and Greece and the uncontrollable issue of paper money *kaime* (introduced in 1839), the trade deficit, and the poor financial performance of the Porte after the commercial agreements of 1838–41 cast dark clouds over the future of the sultan's empire. Adding to these the international politics of the post-1848 revolutions and the tensions over Ottoman Palestine and the Balkans in the run up to the Crimean War of 1853–6, the Eastern Question steadily became a popular theme again for strategists, international lawyers, military men, journalists, and intellectuals in the early 1850s.

During the 1848 revolutions in Europe (including the Balkan dominions of the sultan's empire), Tsar Nicholas I, with his conservative disposition and in his role as 'the gendarme of Europe', supplied military aid to suppress the revolutionaries in the Austrian and Ottoman Balkans. The next year, however, with the strong backing of the liberal British and French governments, Grand Vizier Mustafa Reşid Paşa's rejection to return to Austria a number of Polish and Hungarian revolutionaries who sought refuge in the sultan's empire met with Austrian and Russian protests.[4] St Petersburg threatened to remove the Principalities

[4] Candan Badem, *The Ottoman Crimean War (1853–1856)* (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 46; BOA i.DUiT 147/1; cf. Bayram Bayraktar, 'Osmanlı Arşiv Belgeleri Işığında Devletler Hukuku Açısından 19. Yüzyılda Osmanlı'ya Sığınan Lehistan ve Macar Mültecileri Hakkında Düşünceler', *Çağdaş Türkiye Tarihi Araştırmaları Dergisi* 19(39) (2019): 759–78, at 773.

from the sultan's jurisdiction.[5] Britain sent a squadron in October 1849 into the Dardanelles as a sign of commitment to the defence of Istanbul. Since this constituted a violation of the stipulations of the inter-imperial Straits agreement of 1841 (see Chapter 8), a crisis was immediately provoked among the Powers.[6] It culminated with a British apology and the withdrawal of her squadrons in January 1850. But the event served as a 'dress rehearsal' for what was to come a few years later.[7]

At about the same time a squabble took place between the French Catholic and Orthodox Churches over the sanctuaries in Judaea in Ottoman Palestine. What had begun as an inter-church conflict in 1847 turned into an inter-imperial crisis by 1852, especially when Napoleon III, Bonaparte's nephew, declared himself emperor following a coup d'état. With the purpose of reasserting the greatness of France as well as satisfying his Catholic supporters, Napoleon III sought a resolution to the sanctuary dispute on the basis of the capitulatory agreements. But Tsar Nicholas I opposed French officialdom's scheme, reminding France of the 1774 Russo-Ottoman treaty that had granted Russia the protection of the Orthodox in the Ottoman Empire.[8]

As results, the Porte delegated commissions (one consisted of a Greek, a Catholic, and an Armenian, the other, Muslim ulema) to investigate the matter. Faced with persistent exhortations on the part of French and Russian agents, Sultan Abdülmecid I changed his mind more than once.[9] France even sent a frigate, the *Charlemagne*, to the Bosphorus in order to obtain a satisfactory decision from the sultan, and staged a demonstration with six battleships and six frigates just off Tripoli.[10]

The personal animosity and ideological difference between Nicholas I and Napoleon III—the tsar detested the latter's ascendancy and refused to recognize him as emperor—intensified the strain among the Powers. Public debates began between the foreign ministers of France and Russia.[11] Against the Anglo-French pact, Russian officialdom believed that they had Austria in their pocket.[12] In the late 1840s, the tsar had aided the court of Vienna in the suppression of the revolutionary threat. In 1852, the dispute between Austria and the Porte over Montenegro garnered the support of St Petersburg as the latter attempted to tie

[5] David M. Goldfrank. *The Origins of the Crimean War* (Harlow: Longman, 1994), 69–70.
[6] Puryear, *England, Russia*, 149, 153. [7] Goldfrank, *Origins*, 70–71. [8] See Ch. 1.
[9] Puryear, *England, Russia*, 197, 222; Goldfrank, *Origins*, 80–84.
[10] Frémeaux, *La Question*, 101–2; Abbenhuis, *An Age of Neutrals*, 69–70; Badem, *The Crimean War*, 66; Goldfrank, *Origins*, 94.
[11] Ibid. 125.
[12] On Austro-Russian relations in the 1850s, see B. Unckel, *Österreich und der Krimkrieg. Studien zur Politik der Donaumonarchie in den Jahren 1852–1856* (Lübeck: Matthiesen, 1969), and E. V. Sirotkina, 'Vostochnyj Vopros, Krymskaya Vojna i Konec "Svyashhennogo Al'yansa" v Avstrijsko-Rossijskix Otnosheniyax', *Izvestiya Saratovskogo Universiteta. Novaya seriya. Seriya: Istoriya. Mezhdunarodnye otnosheniya* 18 (1) (2018): 77–83.

together the differences in the Balkans with the disputes in Palestine in order to gain diplomatic leverage.[13]

Even though Austro-Ottoman friction over Montenegro ended in early 1853, the Russo-Ottoman altercation lingered after St Petersburg persisted in its demands for a *sened* (bill) for a virtual protectorate over the Greek Christian subjects of the sultan, which would be extended to the holy sites in Palestine.[14] In part under French pressure, but also on the grounds that authorizing Russia to provide such protection would legally open the path for further Russian interventions subsequently, the Porte stubbornly rejected the Russian demand. The tsar then mobilized his troops in the Danubian Principalities and embarked upon naval operations in the Black Sea.[15]

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The Eastern Question returned to the agenda of inter-imperial politics in the early 1850s in this context, amid the rising tides of war, revolutions, a coup d'état, rebellions in the Ottoman Empire, and religious competition. Tsar Nicholas I refashioned it as a question not of the maintenance of the Ottoman Empire but of her 'peaceful' partition among the Powers, as Russia and Britain had secretly agreed upon in 1844.[16] Since the Congress of Vienna of 1814–15, the inter-imperial order had been based on a conservative and anti-revolutionary understanding of the preservation of stability in Europe and its periphery. Now, in the early 1850s, the sultan's empire came to be considered by revisionists as a fundamental threat to European peace and security.

For a decade, a number of pamphlets, journal articles, and opinion pieces were published with the same title, 'The Eastern Question'. There was a familiar theme: '[T]he Asiatic Turkish race, fortunately or unfortunately, has evinced an utter incompetency for . . . a fundamental and internal civilisation,' one such piece read. 'The Turks' did not have a place among 'the civilized nations of Europe'.[17]

By the same token, in his talks with the British ambassador, George Hamilton Seymour, in January 1853, Tsar Nicholas I infamously referred to the Ottoman Empire as 'the sick man of Europe', doomed to die.[18] In line with the 1844 secret agreement, he suggested that, before the sick man died, Britain and Russia ought to take precautions.[19] The next day he shared with Seymour concrete plans of

[13] Richmond, *Canning*, 239–40. The Austro-Ottoman crisis resulted from the slow evacuation of Ottoman troops from Montenegro following the successful suppression of a riot there.

[14] Bernadotte E. Schmidt, 'The Diplomatic Preliminaries of the Crimean War', *American Historical Review* 25(1) (1919): 36–67, at 37–8.

[15] Bilal Şimşir, 'Kırım Savaşı Arifesinde Mustafa Reşid Paşa'nın Yazışmaları', in *Mustafa Reşid Paşa ve Dönemi*, 77–83.

[16] Anait Surenovna Akop'janc, 'Vostochnyj Vopros v Geopolitike Rossii', *Interekspo Geo-Sibir'* (2015): 44–8, at 45.

[17] Anonymous, *Hints on the Solution of the Eastern Question by One Who Has Resided in the Levant*, (London: R. Clarke, 1853), 19; Frémaux, *La Question*, 101.

[18] Ibid. [19] Şimşir, 'Kırım Savaşı', 78.

partition, offering London control over Cyprus and Egypt.[20] But the Aberdeen cabinet in London was not prepared to accept such a scheme—in fact, they were entirely opposed to it. They wanted to preserve the sultan's empire even if this had now become a much more taxing endeavour for Britain.[21]

The tsar also shared his plans for the partition of the Ottoman Empire with the Austrian king, Franz Joseph.[22] Grateful as he was for the Russian policing and diplomatic assistance in 1848 and 1852–3, Franz Joseph also followed a conservative inter-imperial policy in line with Metternich's diplomatic policy since the 1810s, which meant keeping the Ottoman Empire intact. Subsequently, in the slipstream of the transimperial security culture of the time, a series of ambassadorial conferences were held in Vienna in 1853 under the initiative of Britain and Austria and with the purpose of remedying Russo-Ottoman disputes and restraining the tsar from following any such scheme he had proposed. Notes were presented to both courts for the settlement of a lasting peace: for the Porte to acknowledge Russian protection of the Greek Orthodox and for Russia to evacuate the Danubian principalities. But both the Porte and Russia were disinclined to accept these terms, and came up with their incompatible counter-proposals.[23] The logjam was followed by belligerent acts in the Black Sea. In September 1853, the Russian fleet destroyed the Ottoman port of Sinop.[24] On 5 October, the Ottoman Empire declared war on Russia.[25]

Over the next five months the attempts to obtain a settlement between the two cabinets during ambassadorial meetings in Vienna yielded no results. In the end, seeing that there was no prospect for a peaceful settlement, Britain responded positively to the adventurous Napoleon III's calls to enter the Black Sea with British fleets that were already stationed in Istanbul.[26] At the end of March 1854, the Russo-Ottoman war became a Great Power war.[27] Britain and France formed a costly alliance with the Porte 'for the maintenance of [the Ottoman Empire] and [the] general equilibrium of Europe'.[28]

The Crimean War was not simply a disruption of the transimperial security culture of the time nor the destruction of the Concert of Europe, as has been previously argued.[29] Aside from calculations of strategic gain and prestige, it was fought mainly for the preservation of the existing patterns of security, self-restraint among the Powers, multilateral action (towards the Porte), and the

[20] Goldfrank, *Origins*, 127. [21] Puryear, *England, Russia*, 206–15.
[22] BOA i.HR 21231/17.
[23] BOA i.HR 21220/6/8 and 21231/17; cf. *Osmanlı Belgelerinde Kırım Savaşı (1853–6)* (Ankara: T. C. Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi Daire Başkanlığı, 2006), 35–41; Puryear, *England, Russia*, 296–8; E. V. Tarle, *Krymskaya Vojna*, vol. 1 (Moscow: Izdatelstvo Yurayt, 2018), 147–92.
[24] Ibid. 296–333. [25] BOA HR.SYS 903/2/37–9; cf. *Osmanlı Belgelerinde*, 57–69.
[26] Puryear, *England, Russia,* 301; Şimşir, 'Kırım Savaşı', 87–9.
[27] Schmidt, 'The Diplomatic Preliminaries', 38–9.
[28] Hugh McKinnon Wood, 'The Treaty of Paris and Turkey's Status in International Law', *The American Journal of International Law* 37(2) (April 1943): 262–74, at 265.
[29] Schroeder, *The Destruction*.

maintenance of the European balance of power by ensuring the Ottoman territorial integrity.

More than 900,000 people died during the next two years. Military victories and Austrian support of the Anglo-French–Ottoman alliance became decisive in forcing Russia's back against the wall. Paramount too was the Porte's declaration of an edict on 18 February 1856 which facilitated the subsequent Paris Peace Treaty of 30 March 1856 and hastened the termination of the war. But both the Ottoman edict and the Paris peace unintendedly gave rise to new perils, jeopardizing the stability of Europe and the Levant—particularly in Mount Lebanon.

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The *Hatt-ı Hümâyun* of February 1856, also known as the *Islahat Fermanı* (Reform Edict), was above all a diplomatic response to wring favourable terms from the upcoming peace negotiations between Russia and the Ottoman Empire. It is usually considered the second major official document in the Ottoman *Tanzimat* era (1839–76) after the Gülhane Edict of 1839. The contexts of the production of the two edicts were similar in many respects. Both were promulgated in times of transimperial crisis. Both made arguably liberal pledges to an Ottoman as well as a European audience. In 1839, the Porte's object was to attract foreign support against one of its vassals. In 1856, it looked to obtain an agreement with Russia in a way that would prevent St Petersburg from future intervention in its domestic affairs with respect to Greek Christians. Moreover, the 1856 edict complemented the 1839 edict in perpetuating the Porte's commitment to the ambiguous principle of 'civilization'.

Yet, unlike 1839, the 1856 edict was not drafted by Ottoman statesmen alone. It was not 'home-grown'.[30] Instead, a commission comprising British ambassador Stratford Canning, French ambassador Édouard Antoine Thouvenel (1818–66), and the Austrian internuncio to the Porte, Anton von Prokesch-Osten (1795–1876), Prince Callimachi, an Ottoman Greek representing the Greek Orthodox subjects of the sultan, as well as Grand Vizier Mehmed Emin Âli Paşa and the foreign minister, Fuad Paşa, discussed its content and drafted it.

The latter two were both protégés of Mustafa Reşid. Born in the same year (1815), Âli and Fuad had followed the same educational path through the Translation Bureau (*Tercüme Odası*), where they mastered French, before serving the Ottoman foreign ministry in Paris, London, Vienna, and St Petersburg as second-tier bureaucrats under Reşid's supervision. Their relations with their patron were tarnished when Âli accepted appointment as grand vizier in place of Reşid in 1855. Even then, they both furthered Reşid's pro-liberal Europe policies and considered it their ultimate end to make the sultan's empire a

[30] Deringil, *Conversion*, 66.

member of the Concert of Europe, to guarantee her security and territorial integrity against European, and especially Russian, aggressions.[31]

By this point, the Great Powers had come to police almost the entire world 'from a position of assumed cultural, material and legal superiority', having engaged in wars and interventions in different parts of the world from China and Siam to the Americas.[32] They had granted themselves the authority to intervene in the political affairs of so-called 'less civilized' polities as a special right and responsibility and an instrument of global order maintenance or order transformation. The so-called standard of civilization thus served as a licence for the political, legal, and armed interventions of the European Powers.[33]

The principle of 'civilization', now the over-arching theme and grand narrative of international political thought, was also adopted by the Ottoman ministers Âli and Fuad Paşas.[34] By the mid-1850s, the two embraced *medeniyetçilik* (civilizationism) as an ideology for reforming and securing the Ottoman Empire. While in the 1830s Mustafa Reşid had upheld the notion as a discursive apparatus to garner the support of the Powers against the Porte's 'uncivilized' Egyptian 'other' (see Chapter 7), Âli and Fuad utilized the notion as a discursive practice with the purpose of avoiding being on the receiving end of Great Power interventions, subordination, or informal rule. For this purpose, they thought, the sultan's empire had to be elevated to the level of 'the civilized', or at least she had to 'pretend' to be one.[35]

Their appeal to 'civilizationism' was a distinctly opportunistic, power-oriented, and imperialist policy. They were mesmerized by the military, economic, technological, and political achievements of the European Powers. In a similar vein to Japan, instead of steadfastly resisting the perils of the new global order, or rebelling against the insecurities it posed for less privileged peoples, the Ottoman ministers preferred to change their empire's standing in the global imperial order. For Japan, the matter became one of ensuring the civilized identity of their empire by means of expansionism.[36] For the Porte, at least for now, it was a matter of becoming a member of the Concert of Europe or the Family of Nations.

While preparing the Reform Edict together with British, French, and Austrian ambassadors and Prince Callamachi, the eyes of Âli and Fuad were trained on the specific objective of marking the civilized character of the Porte.[37] The edict

[31] For more detailed accounts of the lives of the two Ottoman ministers, see Rasim Marz, *Ali Pascha—Europas vergessener Staatsman* (Berlin: Frank & Timme, 2016); Yılmaz Öztuna, *Ali Paşa* (Ankara: Kültür ve Turizm Bakanlığı, 1988); Fuad Andıç and Suphan Andıç, *Sadrazam Ali Paşa. Hayatı, Zamanı ve Vasiyetnamesi* (Istanbul: Eren Yayıncılık, 2000); Fuad Andıç and Suphan Andıç, *Kırım Savaşı, Ali Paşa ve Paris Antlaşması* (Istanbul: Eren Yayıncılık, 2002); Engin D. Akarlı, *Belgelerle Tanzimat. Osmanlı Sadrazamlarından Ali ve Fuad Paşaların Siyasi Vasiyetnameleri* (Istanbul: Boğaziçi Üniversitesi Yayınları, 1978).

[32] Simpson, *Great Powers*, 5.

[33] Suzuki, *Civilization and Empire*; Bell, 'Empire and Imperialism', 867–8; Anghie, *Imperialism*, 4.

[34] Osterhammel, 'Approaches to Global History', 12. [35] Çetinsaya, 'Kalemiye'den', 55–6.

[36] Suzuki, *Civilization and Empire*. [37] BOA i.HR 129/6534.

accordingly echoed and extended the guarantees and rights that had been pledged in the 1839 Gülhane Edict, even though these pledges had remained largely unfulfilled. Yet the subtext of 1856 differed immensely from its antecedent.

The sacred shari'a law, the Qur'an, and ancient laws and glories were not mentioned in the new edict.[38] This symbolized the elimination of the centuries-long hierarchy between the Muslim and non-Muslim populations of the empire. Nor was there any direct correlation to the 'circle of justice' in the script. In 1856, instead of the principle of security-with-prosperity, an egalitarian ethos was accentuated, i.e. equality 'without distinction of classes and of religion' and 'in matters of military service, in the administration of justice, in taxation, in admission to civil and military schools, in public employment, and in social respect' such as forms of dress and the erection of new buildings.[39] The 1856 edict pledged to make it 'lawful for foreigners to possess landed property in [the sultan's] dominion, conforming themselves to the laws and police regulations . . . after arrangements have been come to with Foreign Powers', an act that took effect only in the late 1860s. Taxes were 'to be levied under the same denomination from all the subjects of my Empire'.[40] The sultan promised:

> Every Christian or other non-Mussulman community shall be bound, within a fixed period, and with the concurrence of a Commission composed ad hoc of members of its own body, to proceed . . . to examine into its actual immunities and privileges, and to discuss and submit to my Sublime Porte the reforms required by the progress of civilisation and of the age.[41]

With its bold, forward-looking European language and clearly formulated plan of action, the 1856 Edict aimed to consolidate the allegiance of non-Muslim subjects of the sultan.

Seen together, all these proposals stemmed, in part, from the desire to thwart revisionist (Russian) schemes for the partition of the sultan's empire, and to serve as an all-encompassing guarantee that Russia had wanted to obtain from the Porte for the protection of the Greek Orthodox since 1853. It aimed to take away from St Petersburg the right to play any part in Ottoman reform, and to present the tsar with a fait accompli at the Paris Peace Conference.[42]

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In the latter sense, and almost in this sense only, the edict yielded the intended results. Having suffered heavy defeats and humiliation at the hands of the allies, Russia, under her new tsar, Alexander II (Nicholas I died of pneumonia in 1855),

[38] Davison, *Reform*, 54–5.

[39] 'Firman and Hat-i Humayun [*sic*] Sultan of Turkey)', in Bailey, *British Diplomacy*, 287, appendix 6; emphasis mine. See also Davison, *Reform*, 55.

[40] 'Firman and Hat-i Humayun', 290. [41] Ibid. 287. [42] Davison, *Reform*, 58–9.

was already inclined to peace. The Porte's declaration of a reform edict left the court of St Petersburg with little diplomatic margin during the peace talks in Paris in 1856. Consequently, Alexander II subscribed with great reluctance to the neutrality of the Black Sea. He also complied with the establishment of a river commission to ensure free navigation and security for the Danube, and to address any difference among the riparian states as well as countries like Britain and France which traded in high volume with the region.[43] And he agreed on the autonomy of Moldavia, Wallachia, and Serbia, while restoring to the sultan the prewar territories that had been lost during the fighting.[44]

The Paris Conference of 1856 materialized what the Vienna Congress of 1814–15 had aspired to obtain with respect to the Eastern Question. In 1815, the Powers had been unable to guarantee the territorial integrity of the European dominions of the sultan's empire under European public law as a result of the Porte's unrelenting dismissal of their propositions.[45] But, in 1856, the court of Istanbul was more than willing for such a transimperial guarantee. In fact, as already mentioned, under Âli and Fuad its efforts had been bent on being 'admitted to the Concert of Europe' which would seal their empire's right to exist.[46]

The seventh article of the resulting Treaty of Paris, which Grand Vizier Âli Paşa himself proposed, accordingly spelled out that the signatories of the treaty 'declare the Sublime Porte admitted to *participate in the advantages* of the Public Law and System (Concert) of Europe'.[47] They would respect 'the Independence and Territorial Integrity of the Ottoman Empire, jointly guarantee the strict observance of this commitment, and will therefore consider any act [tending to its violation] as a matter of general interest'.[48] Furthermore, the ninth article explicitly referred to the sultan's Reform Edict of 18 February, stipulating that the latter's communication to the signatories of the treaty 'cannot in any case, give to the said powers the right to interfere, either collectively or separately, in the relations of His Majesty the Sultan with his subjects nor in the internal administration of his empire'.[49]

The signing of the Treaty of Paris, and its ratification a month later, meant that Russo-Ottoman differences in the Black Sea, the Balkans, and the Caucasus, which had haunted generations of Ottoman sultans and risked European peace since the eighteenth century, and which had formed the crux of the many crises relating to the Eastern Question, were now brought under the jurisdiction of European public

[43] For a recent, well-researched, and beautifully written study, see Constantin Ardeleanu, *The European Commission of the Danube, 1856–1948: An Experiment in International Administration* (Leiden: Brill, 2020).

[44] T. W. Riker, 'The Concert of Europe and Moldavia in 1857', *English Historical Review* 42 (1927): 227–44; H. Temperley, 'The Treaty of Paris of 1856 and Its Execution', *Journal of Modern History* 4 (1932), pt 1: 405–7.

[45] See Ch. 4. [46] Ali Pasha, *Political Testament*, 35.

[47] Wood, 'The Treaty of Paris', 262–3; emphasis mine. [48] Ibid. 263.

[49] Davison, *Reform*, 413.

law. The Ottoman Empire had already de facto been an integral feature of the European security system.[50] Now her territorial integrity was guaranteed de jure. Whether she was placed on an equal footing with the other five Great Powers was deliberately left ambiguous (especially in Article 7).[51]

Irrespective of this ambiguity, to Ottoman statesmen the Treaty of Paris was the realization of an ultimate objective. The so-called Christian provinces of their empire had now been officially withdrawn from Russian protection. This meant not only the annulment of the 1774 Kaynarca Treaty but also, in the eyes of the Ottoman ministers, an end to the ambiguity of their empire's position in the global imperial order. Âli Paşa, the Ottoman plenipotentiary who affixed his signature to the treaty in Paris, wrote in his political testament that, in 1856, the Porte had become 'a member of the family of great nations who respect each other's rights'.[52] When the news from Paris arrived in Istanbul, Sultan Abdülmecid I jubilantly and prematurely declared his hope that 'my Empire, henceforth a member of the great family of Europe, will prove to the entire universe that it is worthy of a prominent place in the concert of civilised nations'.[53]

Many historical actors argued that the Eastern Question was permanently resolved at one blow by placing the Ottoman Empire under the guarantee of European public law. One hour after the treaty was signed at the French ministry of foreign affairs at 1 p.m. on 30 March, the prefect of police in Paris announced the news, stating that 'the peace of Europe' was placed 'upon a firm and durable basis . . . in settling the Eastern Question'.[54] The argument that the Eastern Question had been 'definitively settled' repeatedly appeared in the publications of the day.[55] The treaty was considered proof of the strength of international law in Europe, as the two major antagonists of the tsar, Britain and France, had become allies with Austria and thus confined a permanent threat. Recent scholarly studies have likewise claimed, 'After 1856, the Eastern Question receded in European diplomacy for decades.'[56] However, as Temperley rightly argues, there would be 'more danger of [a total European] war after, than before, the peace was signed.'[57] Equally perilously, there would be more instability in the Ottoman Empire immediately after the 1856 edict was promulgated than before.

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The adverse results of the Paris Peace and the 1856 edict in the sultan's dominions and Europe and the endurance of the Eastern Question resulted from a number of factors. For one, the proclamation of the 1856 edict incited graver schisms among

[50] Palabıyık, 'The Emergence', 247.
[51] Wood, 'The Treaty of Paris', 274.
[52] Ali Pasha, *Political Testament*, 35.
[53] Edhem Eldem, 'Ottoman Financial Integration with Europe: Foreign Loans, the Ottoman Bank and the Ottoman Public Debt', *European Review* 13(3) (2005): 431–45, at 432.
[54] 'Conclusion of Peace', *The Times*, 31 Mar. 1856, 9.
[55] Ibid.; *Le Moniteur*, 1 Apr. 1856.
[56] Mitzen, *Power in Concert*, 210–11.
[57] Temperley, 'Treaty of Paris', 387.

the elites in Istanbul and insecurity in the wider empire. The manner in which it had been drafted, with the direct involvement of European diplomats and its language purified of Islamic nuances, was considered a disgrace to Ottoman dignity and sovereignty not only by the hardline conservatives but even by more moderate figures like Mustafa Reşid Paşa himself.[58] This intensified the struggle between Âli and Fuad Paşas, on the one hand, and conservative, pro-Russian statesmen such as Rıza Paşa, on the other.

Secondly, at the hands of ultra-conservative and sometimes incompetent governors, virtually all of whom condemned the edict, the reforms pledged were hardly implemented to any satisfaction in several provinces. The rights and liberties granted to Christian subjects prompted a religious backlash, widespread antagonism, and outrage on the part of a considerable portion of the Muslim population, who viewed the edict as an encroachment on their laws, regulations, and religious privileges.[59] All the while, Christian subjects of the sultan remained dissatisfied with new reforms because, despite the rights granted to them, aside from their poor (or non-)implementation, they were still made subject to heavy new taxes for exemption from military service, which they detested.[60] The four years between 1856 and 1860 witnessed a series of Christian rebellions and 'disturbances' in Crete, Bosnia, Herzegovina, Albania, and Montenegro, and Muslim outrages against Christians in Syria (Nablus, Gaza, Aleppo, and Damascus) and Jeddah, where 19 individuals, including the British and French consuls, were killed in 1858.[61]

Thirdly, the Paris peace did not bring to an end—in fact, by contrast, it even inspired—imperial revisionism in Europe. Even though France and Russia had been belligerents during the war, the postwar settlement paved the way for their rapprochement.[62] Tsar Alexander II was anxious to revise the stipulations of the Treaty of Paris with respect to the Balkans and the Black Sea. And his revisionism sat well with Napoleon III's ambitions to redraw the map of Europe.[63]

The French emperor's victories during the Crimean War had boosted his prestige, and set him on a similarly revisionist, if not expansionist, course of foreign policy. During the war he had developed new schemes to reinvigorate France's naval capability and shift the borders of Europe eastwards by appropriating much of Belgium, Savoy, and the Rhineland, and by creating loose federal

[58] Davison, *Reform*, 57–8.

[59] 'Memo on the Province of Tripoli par M. Blanche', 18 Apr. 1857, AMAE Corr. Consulaire Beyrouth, 42CCC/7/178.

[60] Farah, *Politics*, 499–519.

[61] BOA HR.TO. 232/17; 231/7; Farah, *Politics*, 525–6; Thouvenel to Fuad Pacha, 29 Dec. 1859, AMAE 133CP/343/15.

[62] S. Gorianov, 'Les Étapes de l'alliance franco-russe (1853–1861)', *Revue de Paris* 19(1) (1912): 1–29; 19(3): 529–44; 19(4): 755–76; Temperley, 'Treaty of Paris', 387.

[63] François Charles-Roux, *Alexandre II, Gortchakoff et Napoléon III* (Paris: Plon–Nourrit, 1913), 179–80.

structures in Italy and Germany over which to exercise informal influence. An idea entertained by the emperor at the time was the establishment of an Arab kingdom in the Levant under the Algerian leader Abd al-Qader (1808–83).[64]

In 1858, however, Napoleon III limited his ambitions to Italy. He endorsed the Sardinian cause with the aim of establishing an Italian confederation, under the presidency of the pope, that would free northern Italy from Austrian rule.[65] His aggressive policy resulted in a battle with the Austrians in Piedmont, while Britain was embroiled in rebellions and battles in Asia—the Great Mutiny in India (1857) and the second Opium War in China (1856–60)—to sustain her colonial interests.[66] France thus positioned herself once more as a competitor to Britain (despite their joint mission in China), while French policy seemed 'designed not just to achieve parity with Britain but actively to subjugate Britain to the French political will'.[67]

Napoleon III brought Austria to heel at the Conference of Villafranca in 1859. A few months later, in the spring of 1860, when he signed a treaty with the prime minister of Piedmont–Sardinia, the count of Cavour, to annex Nice and Savoy, eyebrows were again raised in London and Berlin for fear of an adventurous expansion by France.[68] Having anticipated such disquiet, Napoleon III made secret pacts with Alexander II on 25 September 1857 (verbally) and 3 March 1859 (officially) with respect to Austria. The two emperors also agreed to act in concert over the Eastern Question and to adopt a common stance in the event of the collapse of the Ottoman Empire.[69] That is, Russia revived her 1844 agreement with Britain, which had fallen by the wayside in 1853. But now, St Petersburg replaced London for the France of Napoleon III as the other party, a party which, unlike British cabinets, welcomed the revisionist dispositions of the Russian tsars and the establishment of a European protectorate over the Christian subjects of the sultan.[70]

In 1859 and early 1860, Russian strategists were prepared for the disintegration of the sultan's empire and devised material schemes for establishing a confederation of small Christian states in the Balkans—proclaiming Istanbul (Constantinople) a free city—in a similar vein to Napoleon III's designs in Italy.[71] Since the foreign minister, Gorchakov, knew that Italy, not the Eastern Question, was France's prior

[64] Abd al Qader was the leader of the Algerian resistance movement against French colonial occupation in the 1830s and 1840s. When the resistance was suppressed, he left for Bursa and, in 1858, for Damascus. Michele Raccagni, 'The French Economic Interests in the Ottoman Empire', *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 11(3) (1980): 339–67, at 346.

[65] Brown, 'Palmerston', 693.

[66] James F. McMillan, *Napoleon III* (Harlow: Longman, 1991), 84–92.

[67] Brown, 'Palmerston', 693.

[68] Persigny to Thouvenel, 10 May 1860, AMAE 8CP/717/4.

[69] Charles-Roux, *Alexandre II*, 214, 219, 239, 245, 300.

[70] Ibid. 237.

[71] Kiselev to Gorchakov, 25 Apr. 1860, AVPRI, f. Kantselyariya, d. 149, l. 246; cf. M. T. Panchenkova, *Politika Francii na Blizhnem Vostoke i Syrijskaya Ekspediciya, 1860–1861 gg.* (Moscow: Izdatel'stvo Nauka, 1966), 36.

concern at this point, he decided on a patient policy.[72] When his diplomats approached France, the message they were instructed to deliver attested that the courts of Paris and St Petersburg had to act in alliance 'in the event of the collapse of the Ottoman Empire', but this did not require an immediate resolution. France could 'introduce points on which to agree' and to which 'the Russian government would respond with complete frankness.'[73]

Simultaneously, Gorchakov endeavoured to bring the border disputes in Montenegro and the situation of the Christians in Bulgaria, Bosnia, Herzegovina, and Greece to the agenda of the Powers, as they were all 'intolerable' for Russia. He was aware that his calls to redraw the map of the Balkans would be met by Austro-British opposition. He therefore proposed to Paris and Berlin the creation of a union (*soyuz*) between Russia, Prussia, and France, against whom 'Britain and Austria will be powerless'.[74]

The French foreign minister, Thouvenel, who had only recently arrived from Istanbul to take up his new post in February 1860, reacted positively to the Russian proposal in general, though he noted, just like Gorchakov, that they would be in 'no hurry' to set out the specific points of the projected agreement, and that there should be 'no rush for the dismemberment of the Ottoman Empire'.[75] According to Thouvenel, the sultan's empire was an anomaly and would 'fall herself as a consequence of internal contradictions'.[76]

But Prussia did not affirm the proposal for the 'separation of the Christian provinces from the Ottoman Empire' by a triple alliance.[77] A relatively silent actor in the politics of the Eastern Question since the late eighteenth century, usually following the other Powers, Berlin suddenly emerged as one of the key players in 1860–61. Its position also signified the persistence of the Concert of Europe after the Crimean War.

When Gorchakov hinted at the idea to his ambassador, the Prussian foreign minister, Baron Schleinitz, instead suggested a collective approach to the Eastern Question, which 'should naturally involve the Ottoman Empire as well'. He warned his Russian correspondents that the British would oppose the Russian approach.[78] The Austrian foreign minister, Count Rechberg, was pleased with the

[72] Kiselev to Gorchakov, 27 June 1860, AVPRI, f. Kantselyariya, d. 149, l. 362; cf. Panchenkova, *Syrijskaya Ekspediciya*, 36.

[73] Ibid.

[74] Kiselev to Gorchakov, 12 June 1860, AVPRI, f. Kantselyariya, d. 150, l. 42–3; cf. Panchenkova, *Syrijskaya Ekspediciya*, 37; Charles-Roux, *Alexandre II*, 288–9.

[75] Lynn M. Case, *Édouard Thouvenel et la diplomatie du Second Empire*, trans. Guillaume de Bertier de Savigny (Paris: A. Pedone, 1976), 72–102.

[76] Kiselev to Gorchakov, 30 June 1860, AVPRI, f. Kantselyariya, d. 150, ll. 246; cf. Panchenkova, *Syrijskaya Ekspediciya*, 37.

[77] Alexander Gustav Adolph Freiherr von Schleinitz to [Otto von Bismarck-Schönhausen], 15 May 1860, GStA I HA Rep 81 Petersburg nach 1807, I Nr. 206 Bd 2.

[78] Schleinitz to Albrecht Graf von Bernstorff, 13 May 1860, GStA I HA Rep 81, f. 249–51; Panchenkova, *Syrijskaya Ekspediciya*, 36.

Prussian response. The courts of Berlin and Vienna concurred that 'the Russian plan approaches the Eastern Question from a wrong angle'.[79]

Gorchakov's proposal and the positions of Prussia and Austria were testaments to how bellicose nationalism and inter-imperial cooperation went hand in hand during the nineteenth century. Divergence among the Powers again produced cooperation and a series of ambassadorial meetings in St Petersburg in May 1860. While a campaign of systematic recrimination began in Russian newspapers 'hostile to Turkey' at the time, at the negotiation table Gorchakov suggested the dispatch of an inquiry commission to Bosnia and Herzegovina.[80] The commission would be composed of an Ottoman committee and the respective consuls of the five Powers. The Powers consented to this; but the Porte rejected the scheme.

In the eyes of the sultan's ministers, the 'discontent' in the Balkans had in fact existed 'rather in appearance than in reality', and any complaints had been 'inspired by ulterior motives' of foreign (Russian) agents who produced 'completely inaccurate' reports.[81] When the proposal of the establishment of a mixed commission to inquire into an Ottoman domestic problem in the Balkans reached him, Foreign Minister Fuad Paşa complained that the suggestion plainly was a 'strange idea . . . to annihilate both the sovereignty of the sultan and the independence of his Empire, and to take a step closer to violate her integrity'.[82] Little did he know then that less than two months later he would preside over an international commission of exactly the same nature in Syria.[83]

Fuad presciently feared that great complications awaited the Porte, as Russia looked to 'tear our allies apart from the Treaty of Paris and make us give up our sovereignty'.[84] He believed that Britain had to interpose the full weight of her influence to prevent a Franco-Russian accord, though he suspected that France might still not like to separate from Britain for Russia, and her economic and financial interests would not permit the bold decision of disintegrating the sultan's empire.

This was precisely what Prussian and Austrian statesmen also wished to believe. However, when, at the end of May 1860, rebellions broke out in Ottoman Montenegro and Herzegovina and a civil war erupted in Ottoman Syria simultaneously, and, in July, when Thouvenel began to brainstorm with Prussian and Russian agents 'several alternatives for the separation of the Ottoman Empire into . . . smaller entities', Prussia and Austria came to share Fuad's fears.[85] Trying to make sense of what was actually happening, Prussian diplomats

[79] Georg Freiherr von Werthern-Beichlingen to Alexander Gustav Adolph Freiherr von Schleinitz, Vienna, 16 May 1860, GStA I HA Rep 81 Petersburg nach 1807, I Nr. 207.
[80] Dervich Pasha (St Petersburg) to Fuad Pasha, 16 Feb. 1860, *ODD* 34.
[81] Fuad Pasha to Musurus (London), 30 May 1860, *ODD* 61.
[82] Fuad Pasha to Musurus (London), 16 May 1860, *ODD* 40.
[83] See Ch. 13.
[84] Fuad Pasha to Musurus (London), 16 May 1860, *ODD* 40.
[85] Robert Heinrich Ludwig Graf von der Goltz to Alexander Gustav Adolph Freiherr von Schleinitz, Paris, 27 July 1860, GStA III. HA MdA I. Nr. 7303, f. 100.

found consolation only in the fact that the French were still very 'vague' and did not seem to have as yet a clear plan.[86] But they were not sure. Were the events concurrently transpiring in the Balkans and Syria a ploy, a conspiracy, and did they represent the immediate theatres of a larger scheme? That they did not know.

Anno 1860: The Civil War in Mount Lebanon

This was an impossible puzzle. As we have seen in the previous chapter, in the 1840s the correlation between the Eastern Question and the origins of violence in Lebanon were evident. The French enterprises to retain her anterior standing in the Levant through Mehmed Ali and Bashir Shihab II, and attempts by the other Powers, and especially Britain, to maintain their stronghold in Syria had sustained the Eastern Question in the country, in fact, well into the '*muqatas* of the local feudal lords. In 1860, the origins of the civil war were equally complex.

Even though Ottoman officialdom and European writers such as Karl Marx were persuaded that the concurrent outbreak of violence in the Balkans and Syria was a ploy, France's eastern policy appeared to be less defined, oscillating between idealistic ambitions, economic considerations, and strategic realities.[87] The narratives of various historical actors concerning the influence of Ottoman and European imperial agents on the ensuing violence were so diverse and contradictory, and the archival evidence so thin, that, from an empirical point of view, we can make only tentative assumptions concerning any direct correlation between the Franco-Russian schemes and the war in Lebanon.

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By the 1850s, Ottoman Lebanon had become a very different world from that of the previous decades, having been transformed from a war zone into a commercial centre. As noted in previous chapters, its economic boom had begun during the Egyptian interregnum. Especially after the signing of the 1838–41 commercial treaties between the Sublime Porte and the European Powers, and following the restoration of Syria to the sultan's rule in 1841, all monopolies were abolished in the eastern Mediterranean, and import tariffs were reduced and fixed as in other parts of the empire, prompting even more economic growth.

When order was largely restored in 1845, the volume of trade in Lebanon increased exponentially, and the social and economic landscape of the country rapidly metamorphized. Gregory M. Wortabet, a Protestant Levantine born in Beirut, who had been travelling in Britain and United States for his religious mission since the early 1830s, was mesmerized by the transformation of his homeland upon his return in 1854. He found that the difference between the

[86] Ibid. [87] See Ch. 12.

small town he had left behind and the thriving Beirut he had just arrived in was like 'midday and midnight'.[88] Its wealth could be seen in shops and stores well-endowed with European and American goods. The oriental feel of a few decades before had been replaced by 'a European air of business'. Lebanese Christians had risen, Wortabet noted not so impartially in his memoirs, from 'ignorance, poverty and degradation to knowledge, wealth and refinement'.[89] He poured scorn on the native Muslims, who, in contrast, and 'in face of the rising intelligence of their Christian fellow-citizens, are in the same status quo they were fifty years ago'.[90]

According to Wortabet, the great lever that enabled the material progress of non-Muslims in Syria was missionary labour, and the ensuing influence of the Europeans who arrived after the missionaries had opened the doors. In reality, the driving forces of change were much more diverse. For one, there were material factors such as technical developments in the domain of transportation (especially the introduction of regular steamship routes from 1835 onwards, a mode of transport which was faster, more reliable, and allowed the carriage of heavy weight cargo), the opening of new banks and arrival of new creditors, and 'the rapid extension of credit and the growing use of the system of purchase'.[91] During the decades Wortabet had been away, Lebanon had become a major producer of silk and supplier for global industry following the great drop in cocoon production in France. This had led to a rapid increase in international prices, which meant instant prosperity for the Lebanese. Several spinning factories were established by mostly French and Lebanese entrepreneurs.[92] The economic growth was accompanied by a demographic boom: by 1860, the Maronite population in Mount Lebanon rose to 200,000 people, while the Druze population numbered about 100,000.[93]

In these transitional years, approximately 30 local merchants—predominantly Greek Orthodox and few Catholics—which included the famous Sursuq, Misk, Tabet, Debbas, Khury, Sayyur, Bustrus, and Tuenis families, prospered and coalesced into a class that 'dominated Lebanese trade and finance' with the 'shared goal of capital accumulation'.[94] As Kirsten Alff aptly demonstrates in her work, they did not simply 'mimic Western capitalist models', but developed their own transregional and transimperial networks, established joint-stock companies, and forged mutually beneficial links with their European business partners in

[88] Gregory M. Wortabet, *Syria and the Syrians; or Turkey in the dependencies*, vol. 1 (London: J. Maaden, 1856), 36.
[89] Ibid. 43. [90] Ibid. 33.
[91] Roger Owen, *The Middle East in the World Economy, 1800–1914* (London: Methuen, 1981), 88–90.
[92] As Owen details, 'the price of an oke of new cocoons rose from an average of 12 piasters in 1848 to over 20 piasters in the early 1850s and to a high of 45 piasters in 1857': ibid. 155.
[93] 'For the monthly convert: Civil War on Mount Lebanon, Missionary House', 1 Aug. 1860, ABCFM v. 6 291/105.
[94] Alff, 'Levantine', 81, 92; Issawi, 'British Trade', 98–9.

Manchester, Liverpool, London, Marseilles, and Lyon, such as George Peter Lascaridi, Michael Spartali, Paul Cababe, and Louis Desgrand.[95] They constituted the 'hinge' between 'the world market and large-scale commerce and banking on the one hand and small-scale peasant and artisan production on the other'.[96] They thus played a crucial role as intermediaries who knew local markets, who spoke local languages and were familiar with local practices, and who could therefore more easily 'enforce contracts', collect debts or 'find retail outlets'.[97] While 'corner [ing] the silk market', they used the revenues they harvested to 'extend credit to peasants in return for a percentage of their agricultural yield' as of the 1850s, thus creating new dependencies in the hinterland.[98]

Besides the transregional networks they had formed, the success of Christian merchants was underpinned also by the age-old *berat* system, i.e. capitulatory legal privileges granted to the employees of the European consuls as dragoman, which placed the latter under foreign jurisdiction and exempted them from paying the taxes levied on Ottoman subjects according to commercial agreements. As contemporaries observed, these local Christian merchants 'bought' *berats* (licences) to enjoy such privileges and acquire legal security or protection from the European consuls overnight, and changed them with the same ease.[99] In very rare cases, when the consuls were reluctant to grant *berat*s, merchants would use their connections in the European metropoles for facilitation.[100] In 1845–6, despite the Porte's decrees on disarmament in Lebanon, *berat*-holders in Juniah continued arms trade for a certain period, as the Porte's agents could not bring them to the court for their 'misdoings'.[101]

A still worse consequence of the morally polluted and economically defiled *berat* system was that the *berat*-holders' evasion of the charges of the state increased the liability of the others.[102] Acrimonious sentiment grew on the part of disadvantaged Muslim merchants and artisans as their commercial activity was confined more and more to the interior.[103] The uneven competition intensified de-industrialization among the Muslims of the Ottoman Empire that had begun in the aftermath of the Napoleonic wars. For example, the number of cotton handicrafts significantly declined between the 1820s and 1870s in Aleppo and Damascus.[104] Violence broke out in both of these towns more than once in the

[95] Outrey to Thouvenel, 23 Apr. 1862, AMAE 42CCC/7/318; Issawi, 'British Trade'; Fawaz, *Merchants*.
[96] Owen, *Middle East*, 88. [97] Ibid. [98] Alff, 'Levantine', 94.
[99] Edwards, *La Syrie*, 79. [100] Outrey to Thouvenel, 23 Apr. 1862, AMAE 42CCC/7/318.
[101] Beyrouth to Brussels, 1 Feb. 1846, DIPLOBEL Turquie, 1839–1846 4117/1/22; BOA HR. SYS 2927/72 ; BOA A.MKT. 36/41.
[102] Edwards, *La Syrie*, 81–2. [103] Owen, *Middle East*, 99.
[104] Pamuk and Williamson, 'Ottoman De-industrialization', 10–11. For a counter argument, see Orhan Kurmuş, 'The 1838 Treaty of Commerce Re-examined', *Économie et sociétés dans l'empire ottoman*, ed. J.-L. Bacque-Grammont and Paul Dumont (Paris: CNRS, 1983), 411–17.

1850s and in 1860, as an expression of 'resistance to the new order in terms of Islamic ideology'—though tax issues, the Porte's conscription policies, the unrest of the thousands of Janissaries who had remained in these towns (particularly Aleppo) after the abolition of their hearths in 1826, and increasing anti-Christian sentiments also contributed.[105] Thousands were left dead, 3,400 in Aleppo alone in 1850.[106]

In Lebanon, social tensions manifested themselves under comparable circumstances, though the country was unique in many respects. Silk factories that were situated largely in the so-called Druze district, and particularly in Deir al-Qamar, rendered the mixed south one of the wealthiest districts and the economic capital of the country. Thanks to brisk economic activity and emigration, the population of Christian peasants significantly increased in Deir al-Qamar and Zahle.

The socioeconomic division between Druze and Christian peasants then became more noticeable. Christian peasants were employed in silk-spinning mills that were run by the new Lebanese Christian as well as European (again, chiefly French) entrepreneurs. These peasants attained economic status and strength over time, as they were supplied with working capital by Christian bankers and merchants.[107] In due course, they even began to lend to other groups, such as the struggling *muqatadjis*, who had once been their overlords, as well as the two *kaymakams* of the mountain.[108] The indigenous Christian owners were distressed by the inability of the weaker Druze sheikhs (both in status and wealth) to pay their debts. The dissonance between ancient feudal privileges and economic status became so striking a feature in social relations in the 1850s that several petitions were dispatched to the Ottoman authorities by the Christian cultivators in the mixed districts, requesting the exclusion of their villages from the jurisdiction of the Druze chiefs.[109]

In addition, the emerging middle classes, Christian merchants, creditors, and the economically ascendant peasantry slowly started to purchase lands, and called on 'state intervention to control production and distribution', demanding from the Porte cadastral surveys and censuses to 'identify whom to tax and how much'.[110] For fear of unveiling any irregularity that might have emerged, and of the future undertaking of tax collection by the Porte itself, the *muqatadjis* resisted

[105] Huri İslamoğlu-İnan, 'Introduction: "Oriental Despotism"', in *The Ottoman Empire and the World Economy*, ed. Huri İslamoğlu-İnan (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 22; Bruce Masters, 'The 1850 Events in Aleppo: An Aftershock of Syria's Incorporation into the Capitalist World System', *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 22(1) (Feb. 1990): 3–20; Rogan, 'Sectarianism'; Abdul-Karim Rafeq, 'The Impact of Europe on a Traditional Economy: The Case of Damascus, 1840–1870', in *Économie et sociétés*, 420–21.

[106] Bruce Masters, *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Arab World: The Roots of Sectarianism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 161.

[107] Firro, *Druzes*, 103, 115–17.

[108] Moore to Alison, 6 Jan. 1858, TNA FO 195/656/2.

[109] Owen, *Middle East*, 161.

[110] Alff, 'Levantine', 92.

such demands. In the late 1840s and early 1850s, the Druze Jumblatts spearheaded the opposition that blocked the cadastral survey project of the Porte.[111]

Finally, after the Porte introduced a new conscription policy that made the Druze liable for military service while allowing Christians to buy themselves out, Lebanon and Hawran found themselves embroiled in more strife in 1852–3.[112] Nearly 5,000 Druze were brutally supressed by Ottoman imperial forces. But it was not merely political resistance that had burst and faded. It also marked the point when the Druze began to cling more firmly to their traditional way of life against the political and economic transformation of the mountain in the 1850s. As Firro tells us, they 'increasingly enclosed themselves within their sectarian particularism', considering their mounting impoverishment, Christian immigration, and the rise of new landowner classes as 'an invasion of their territory.'[113] They vowed to retaliate. And in 1860 they did.

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Historical scholarship has long demonstrated that local actors were the prime agents of change in the late 1850s and in 1860 before the civil war broke out in Mount Lebanon.[114] The widely accepted narrative points to a continuum between the 1856 Reform Edict and the subsequent violence. As the narrative goes, seeing that the edict had promised both religious and class equality and that the Maronite peasants were not represented in the northern Maronite district, unlike the Christian peasants of the Druze-governed mixed districts of the south, a sporadic peasants' uprising broke out in the Kisrawan against the Maronite Khazin sheikhs in 1858.[115] Led by Tanyus Shahin, a muleteer from Rayfun, the rebels demanded 'rule of law', 'equality' with their sheikhs both in political terms (representation) and also in the abolition of extra levies (for holiday, marriage, etc.), and taxation and land distribution in accordance with the 1856 Edict and the individualistic premises of the sultan's 1858 Land Code.[116]

The Kisrawanite peasants styled themselves as the *jahala* (the ignorant), manipulated 'a well-established trope of the "ignorant" commoner', and used it as an excuse for the 'indecencies' they committed. They kidnapped the family members of the northern *muqatadjis*, and staged mysterious, fear-inducing murders.[117] On their shoulders they carried weapons amassed since the Egyptian interregnum and especially since the Crimean War. In a short period

[111] De Lesseps to de Hitte, 5 Aug. 1850, *DDC* 373; Firro, *Druzes*, 107.
[112] Evelessesie to Lhuys, 29 May 1854, AMAE 42CCC/7/11. [113] Firro, *Druze*, 115–16.
[114] Makdisi, *Culture*; Fawaz, *An Occasion*; Farah, *Politics*. [115] Makdisi, *Culture*, 96, 98, 99.
[116] Attila Aytekin, 'Peasant Protest in the Late Ottoman Empire: Moral Economy, Revolt, and the *Tanzimat* Reforms', *International Review of Social History* 57(2) (2012): 206, 214; Attila Aytekin, 'Agrarian Relations, Property and Law: An Analysis of the Land Code of 1858 in the Ottoman Empire', *Middle Eastern Studies* 45(6) (2009): 935–51; M. Macit Kenanoğlu, '1858 Arazi Kanunnamesi ve Uygulanması', *Türk Hukuk Tarihi Araştırmaları* 1 (spring 2006): 107–38; Makdisi, *Culture*, 101.
[117] Makdisi, *Culture*, 100.

they not only managed to force the Khazin sheikhs out of their '*muqatas* and thus uproot a notable family—an unprecedented incident, as Makdisi underscores. They also declared a republic (*jumhurriyyah*) in early 1859, organized their villages instead of looting the Khazin property, elected representatives and a spokesperson (Shahin), 'set up tribunals', and 'distributed harvests and provisions . . . in the name of the common people'. The commoners became the prime movers of change thanks to a 'subaltern understanding of the [1856 Edict]'.[118] When the Kisrawanite peasants came to stage irregular attacks on Shiite villages and attempted to get the Maronite peasants in the mixed districts of the mountain to rise against the *muqatadjis*, Lebanon came to the brink of yet more large-scale violence.[119]

What transpired between 1858 and 1860 was at first a class conflict. When Maronite peasants rallied behind Shahin and against the Khazin sheikhs, the *muqatadjis*, both Christian and Druze, made a 'compact to be one hand . . . to discipline the [disrespectful peasants]'.[120] Another, less mentioned factor in the translation of the dissention into a civil war was the formation of a capitalist–clergy alliance in Beirut under the name of the Young Men's League, also known as the Beirut Committee. According to its members who secretly met with Charles Schefer, the French professor of oriental languages who joined the French expeditionary troops in 1860, the committee was led by the aforementioned bishop, Tobia 'Awn, and prominent Protestant bishop and writer Butrus al-Bustani. Its executive members allegedly involved Naum Kicano, Assad Tabet, and Micheal Fargialla.[121] They established a secret network with some 23 members in the hinterland which belonged to the leading merchant, banker, artisan, and clergy families of Lebanon.[122] They sided with the peasants' anti-*muqatadji* campaign because they considered the feudal *muqatadjis* to be primordial obstacles to free

[118] Ibid. 105. [119] Ibid. 111. [120] Ibid. 114.

[121] 'Letter from a writer settled for the last 20 years in the country, and is well acquainted with the various tribes which inhabit the mountain, 30 June 1860', *The Times*, 21 July 1860, 10. On the role of Bustani, see also Abū Shaqrā, *Al-Ḥarakāt*, 108.

[122] Schefer to Le Ministre, 30 Nov. 1860, AMAE Papiers Charles Schefer, Mission du Liban 161PAAP/3a/264; Hajjar, *L'Europe*, vol. 3, 1292. In Schefer's report the names of the committee members in the districts outside Beirut are listed thus (in French transliteration): Esaad Eldjaounieh (Greek Catholic), Hassan Id (Maronite), Amoun Youssef (Maronite), Chakin Aga (Maronite), Gabriel Mechakka (Greek Catholic) in Deir al-Qamar and Messagip; Sheikhs Bashir El Khory, who was the *qadi* and Maronite judge of the Shuwafiyat council in Jund and Kachmaya; Mansour Maouchy [*sic*] in Djezzin; Youssef Elmubbeikykh (Greek Catholic) in Toffah; Khattar Nadi al-Boustani, cousin of Butros al-Boustani (Maronite) in Kharrouf; Nedjin Abou Shakra (Maronite) in Shuf; Youssef El Khoury (Maronite) and Faris Shakkour (Greek Catholique) in Arkoub; Abdulah Nassour (Greek Orthodox) in the two districts of the Gharb; Abbas el Halou (Maronite), Khalil Neffa (Greek Orthodox) in the Beirut coasts (*sahil*); Chadjan 'Awn, the bother-in-law of Tobia 'Awn in Chabbar; Abou Hatem (Maronite) and Hanna El Khoury (Greek Orthodox) in Metn; Abdullah Museelliem (Maronite), Nassif Djeddoun (Greek Catholic) in Zahle and its environs; Masoud Ferah (Maronite) in the west of Beqaa; and Emir Medjid Qasim Shihab, the grandson of Bashir II and Emir Haydar, representing the interests of the Shihab family.

trade and commercial enterprise as well as to buying and selling of property.[123] Moreover, a number of committee members were unable to claim the large sums they had loaned to the *muqatadjis*, who would flee to the mountains to avoid arrest and punishment.[124] After the 1857 recession in Europe and the mounting financial crisis in the Levant, the repayment of such due loans had become a greater source of anxiety for them.[125]

The clerical members of the committee, for their part, acted as the patrons of the peasants and represented their interests against the *muqatadjis*, as had been the case at least since the beginning of the century. The delegates of the committee told French agents that, in the beginning, there were in fact two groups within their committee, one Greek and the other predominantly Maronite, both of which received 'the support of patriarchs and bishops', and both of which aimed, for the moment, 'to . . . deal with the interests of the Christians in the [silk-rich] mixed districts'.[126]

What is unclear is whether the committee looked to support the peasants before or after the 1858 rebellion began, and whether they aimed to instigate violence in the mountain when their members assembled together. Hurṣid Paṣa, the Ottoman governor of Sayda, repeatedly notified Istanbul that the principal aim of the Beirut committee was to provoke war under 'instructions from a European Consulate, namely the French'. Russian agents on the ground likewise reported that, 'supported by French influence', the committee sought to 'release their co-religionists' in the silk-rich mixed districts besieged by the Druze.[127]

However, other archival evidence and secondary sources suggest that the French consul to Beirut, the comte de Bentivoglio, was dazed by the outbreak of violence in 1860 and that he, as well as Tobia 'Awn, had expended much effort to prevent the Druze–Maronite skirmish at Beit Miri in August 1859. Bentivoglio's correspondence with his seniors in Paris and Bishop Tobia's letters to the Maronite patriarch usually displayed a pacific tone that looked to prevent violence rather than provoke it. Even then, several contemporary observers pointed out that throughout late 1859 and early 1860, the Beirut Committee clandestinely furnished the peasants with money, arms (up to 14,000 muskets), and ammunition smuggled by Maronite bankers in Beirut, and organized the inhabitants of the mountain for a potential fully fledged war.[128]

[123] Schefer to Le Ministre, 30 Nov. 1860, AMAE Papiers Charles Schefer, Mission du Liban 161PAAP/3a/264; Joseph, 'Material Origins', 157–8; Owen, *Middle East*,161; Alff, 'Levantine', 92–5.

[124] 'Kopiya raporta general'nogo konsula Rossii v Bejrute', 3 June 1860, AVPRI f. 133. Kantselyariya, o. 469, l. 258; Owen, *Middle East*, 162, 165.

[125] See Ch. 13.

[126] Schefer to Le Ministre, 30 Nov. 1860, AMAE Papiers Charles Schefer, Mission du Liban 161PAAP/3a/264.

[127] Russian General Consul in Beirut to Lobanov, 1 July 1860, AVPRI f. 133, o. 469, l. 380–82.

[128] Edwards, *La Syrie*, 133–4; 'The Civil War in Syria', *The Times*, 21 July 1860, 10; Wood to Dufferin, 30 May 1861, PRONI D 1071/H/C/3/49/3; cf. Makdisi, *Culture*, 215; Fawaz, *An Occasion*, 56.

Quickly and spontaneously, the Maronite purchase of arms, and rumours and innuendo that the Christians of the south had united with Shahin (though, in fact, the southern villagers were disinclined to join Shahin's army) and that the French fleet was on its way to support the Maronites, gave the conflict a religious colouring. In the spring of 1860, as with the Kisrawan uprising of 1858, mysterious and gruesome murders began to take place in the southern, mixed districts of the mountain under Druze jurisprudence. These instilled great fear, and were understood as acts directed against entire religious groups. They thus provoked reciprocal incidents of sectarian violence between Christians and Druze.[129] The *muqatadjis* of both sects tried to disperse the clouds of war, attempting in vain to calm their peasantry. But a series of trivial quarrels between Druze and Maronite commoners sufficed for the mountain to spin out of control once again.[130]

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In May 1860, hoisting French flags in the hope of garnering Emperor Napoleon III's sympathy and preventing French authorities from backing their traditional Khazin associates, Tanyus Shahin's so-called Kisrawan army marched toward the Jumblatts' *'muqatas* in the south.[131] The Druze *muqatadjis* then sent for help to Hawran—their traditional sectarian base—with the aim of quelling a potential rebellion in their lands, as they had done in the 1820s, and also of fending off another latent attempt to exterminate their sect, as had been the case in the 1840s.[132] A large number of their brethren marched to their relief immediately, and the confrontation quickly spiralled into a full-blown class/sectarian civil war from May to June, which was fought in several locations and lasted for about a month.

More than 10,000 inhabitants perished this time. Droves of people, approximately 80,000 of them, fled their homes and streamed towards the coast or Damascus for refuge. Hundreds of villages were burnt and pillaged, and properties and harvests were ravaged. As had happened in 1841 and 1845, because of their numerical superiority the Maronites had the upper hand at first. They 'set the houses of the Druses [*sic*] on fire wherever possible'. On 20 June, Mount Lebanon was likened by the Prussian consul, Theodore Weber, to 'a sea of flames at night . . . covered with a cloud of black smoke during daytime'.[133]

Soon after Druze reinforcements arrived from Hawran under the leadership of a certain Ismail al-Attrash, their more disciplined armies took control in the south

[129] Theodor Weber to Robert Heinrich Ludwig Graf von der Goltz, Beirut, 26 May 1860, GStA I. HA Rep 81 XI Nr. 66, f. 1.

[130] Fawaz, *An Occasion*, 45; Husayn Ghadban Abū Shaqrā (narrator) and Yūsuf Khaṭṭār Abū Shaqrā (author), *Al-Ḥarakāt fī Lubnān Ilā Ahd al-mutaṣarrifīn* (Beirut: Maba'at al-ittihad, 1953), 99–131.

[131] Makdisi, *Culture*, 101–2.

[132] Ibid. 117–18.

[133] Weber to Robert Heinrich Ludwig Graf von der Goltz, Beirut, 3 June 1860, GStA, I. HA Rep 81 XI Nr. 66 E, f. 7.

and anti-Lebanon, sweeping through all the villages in their route inhabited by the Maronites and some Greek Orthodox in Hasbaya, Rashaya, and Zahle, amongst others.[134] Some of the most tragic scenes unfolded in Deir al-Qamar.[135]

The properties of non-Muslim merchants, the silk factories of the French, Maronites, and Greek Orthodox, and the premises of the Catholic missionaries (Jesuits, Franciscans, and Lazarists) were all attacked, pillaged, or looted. Maronite and Orthodox priests and monks, and even some Muslim Shihab emirs, were killed because of their families' alleged links to the Beirut Committee. The Anglo-Druze special relations which had existed since the early 1840s allowed Protestant (American or British) missionaries to remain untouched in Mount Lebanon, though 11 Protestants could not escape the wrath of the Hawran Druze in anti-Lebanon.[136] An anonymous observer reported that, as soon as it became clear that the Druze had taken control of the war, executive members of the Beirut Committee, such as Naum Kicano and a certain M. Naqqash, both bankers in Beirut, fled the country, taking with them their assets and 'leaving shareholders and creditors to whistle'.[137]

This was not a total war of religions nor of whole communities. All the while, Maronites and Druze, Christians and Muslims provided refuge and safety for each other in their houses and properties. The true heroes and heroines of the civil war were the helping hands. For example, Naife Jumblatt, the sister of Said Jumblatt (one of the protagonists of the previous chapter about whom we will see more below), saved a large number of Maronite women, children, and some men, bringing them to Mukhtara to the family residence.[138] Qasim Abu Nakad, another prominent *muqatadji*, conducted the women and children fleeing from Deir al-Qamar to the coast, in the neighbourhood of Sidon.[139]

In the end, the 1860 civil war almost irrecoverably upset all that had remained from the ancient order of things in Lebanon, the *muqatadji*–tenant bonds of loyalty, the harmonious coexistence between the Maronites and the Druze, and the relative autonomy of the feudal system. Again, before the fighting was over, a narrative war began over the origins of the war, its instigators, and its perpetrators.

[134] 'Prilozhenie Kopiya otnosheniya G. Statskogo sovetnika Bergera k G-nu Komandiru fregata *Il'ja Muromec*', 22 June 1860, AVPRI f. 133, o. 469, l. 460; Al Bitar, *Ḥaliyyāt* vol 1. 261; Abū Shaqrā, *Al-Ḥarakāt*, 119–20.

[135] Weber to Schleinitz, Beirut, 23 June 1860, GStA, I. HA Rep 81 XI Nr. 66 E, f. 25; 'Détails sur les massacres à Deir-el-Camar', n.d., AVPRI f. 133, o. 469, l. 460.

[136] 'For the monthly convert: Civil War On Mount Lebanon, Missionary House', 1 Aug. 1860, ABCFM v. 6 291/105.

[137] 'Letter from a writer settled for the last 20 years in the country, and is well acquainted with the various tribes which inhabit the mountain, 30 June 1860', *The Times*, 21 July 1860, 10. This, I believe, needs to be read with a grain of salt, as it might as well be a pro-Druze statement putting the blame for the origins of violence on the so-called 'Christian party'.

[138] Brant to Bulwer, 30 June 1860, TNA FO 78/1557; 'Kopiya raporta general'nogo konsula v Bejrute', 7 June 1860, AVPRI f. 133, o. 469, l. 2602.

[139] 'The Civil War in Syria', *The Times*, 21 July 1860, 10.

The Khazin sheikhs who had been chased out from their *'muqatas* by the Maronite peasants in 1858 blamed the Maronite bishop, Tobia 'Awn, and Patriarch Bulus Masad for inciting the peasantry to a rebellion.[140] Tobia 'Awn suspected that '[f]oreign hands' had been at work when the rebellion in Kisrawan began. He later blamed the Ottoman authorities for inertia as the rebellion turned into a civil war and the Druze gained the upper hand in the combat.[141] Druze eyewitnesses laid the blame at the door of the French, who, according to one account, stirred up the Druze–Maronite conflict in order to find an excuse for occupation.[142]

European consuls virtually unanimously believed that Hurşid Paşa, the Ottoman governor of Sayda, deliberately refrained from crushing the rebellion in Kisrawan and did almost nothing to quell the Druze–Maronite violence in 1860 because of anti-Christian sentiments. Seeing that Ottoman paşas disarmed the Maronites, and that their troops were sometimes involved in pillaging and looting, the Prussian consul to Beirut, Theodore Weber, claimed that 'the outbreak of a full scale civil war between the Druses [*sic*] and the Maronites . . . was incited especially by the actions of Churchid [sic] Pasha'.[143] Another Prussian agent wrote that the Druze were 'the stick to beat the Christians in the hand of someone high above'.[144] These views were shared by some local onlookers.[145]

For his part, Hurşid Paşa complained that he did not have enough men and resources at his disposal to suppress either the rebellion or the 1860 war, especially after the imperial Arabistan army stationed in Damascus was ordered to leave Syria by the minister of war, Rıza Paşa, in May–June 1858 in order to quell the uprisings in Bosnia and Herzegovina, prompting a void which had been filled by the *başıbozuks* and other irregular corps recruited from the natives.[146] Hurşid simply could not fathom that an egalitarian movement had sprung out of the 'ignorant' Maronite peasantry interpreting the 1856 edict in their favour, and tactlessly described the Kisrawan rebellion as 'sedition'.[147] And, as noted above, he accused the Beirut Committee (with French schemers behind them) of instigating the civil war in 1860.

Again, what matters for our purpose here is not which of these historical, imperial actors' accounts were more accurate, but the fact that each of them had an unwavering belief that the Lebanese were mere tools manipulated for the

[140] Makdisi, *Culture*, 102. [141] Ibid. 112.

[142] Abū Shaqrā, *Al-Ḥarakāt*, 99–100. This book was written and published decades later, and it is likely that the argument of its author is a post hoc interpretation.

[143] Theodor Weber to Robert Heinrich Ludwig Graf von der Goltz, Beirut, 3 June 1860, GStA I. HA Rep 81 XI Nr. 66 E, f. 1.

[144] Johann Gottfried Wetzstein to Theodor Weber, Damascus, 18 June 1860, GStA I. HA Rep 81, XI Nr. 66 E, f. 15.

[145] Muhammad Kurd 'Alī, *Khiṭaṭ al-Shām*, vol 3 (Damascus: al-Maṭbaʿah al-Ḥadīthah, 1925–8), 79.

[146] Rizk, *Mont Liban*, 224; Gökbilgin, 'Cebel', 689–90. [147] Makdisi, *Culture*, 143–4.

perpetuation of one or another empire's interests—the almost unanimous presumption that violence escalated on account of the locals' gullible, credulous, and 'uncivilized' nature. It requires little effort to discern a bewildering apathy on the part of European and Ottoman agents towards the Kisrawanite peasants' quest for egalitarianism, the new middle class's attempts to secure its economic and financial interests, and the desire of the *muqatadjis* and Christians of the mixed districts to preserve their politically or economically propitious status. Yet, as we will see in the following chapters, the narrative war took place less to obtain a veritable truth about the origins of the war and more to determine the next action the Powers and the Porte ought to take to bring order to Lebanon.

The reaction of the imperial metropoles from late June onwards reveals more of whether the fact that simultaneous revolts broke out in the Balkans and Syria just when the Russian agents were looking to persuade the French and the Prussians for the partition of the Ottoman Empire was simply a coincidence, or whether it was a strategic move. The imperial responses also illustrate the obstinacy and limitations of the Concert of Europe after the Crimean War, and to what degree the persistence of the Eastern Question determined the future of Mount Lebanon.