The Shiites of Lebanon under Ottoman Rule, 1516–1788

*The Shiites of Lebanon under Ottoman Rule, 1516–1788* provides a new perspective on the previously ignored history of the Shiites as a constituent of Lebanese society. Winter presents a history of the community before the nineteenth century, based primarily on unpublished Ottoman Turkish documents. From these, he shows how local Shiites were well integrated in the Ottoman system of rule, and that Lebanon as an autonomous entity only developed in the course of the eighteenth century through the marginalization and then violent elimination of the indigenous Shiite leaderships by an increasingly powerful Druze–Maronite emirate. As such the book recovers the Ottoman-era history of a group which has always been neglected in chronicle-based works, and, in doing so, fundamentally calls into question the historic place within ‘Lebanon’ of what has today become the country’s largest and most activist sectarian community.

**Stefan Winter** is Professeur régulier at the Université du Québec à Montréal (UQÀM). His previous publications have included a number of articles for various journals including *Oriente Moderno* and the *Journal of Near Eastern Studies*. 
Cambridge Studies in Islamic Civilization

Editorial Board
David Morgan (general editor)
Virginia Aksan, Michael Brett, Michael Cook, Peter Jackson,
Tarif Khalidi, Chase Robinson

Published titles in the series are listed at the back of the book
The Shiites of Lebanon under Ottoman Rule, 1516–1788

STEFAN WINTER

Université du Québec à Montréal
Dedicated to Safuh Murtada, ‘Abir Bassam, Bernard Heyberger and Mafalda Ade
Contents

Lists of illustrations and maps           page ix
Acknowledgements                       x
Note on transliterations                xi
List of abbreviations                  xii

Introduction                           1
  Sources                                2
  Argument                               4

1 Shiism in the Ottoman Empire: between confessional ambiguity and administrative pragmatism
  Shiism in Turkish history              7
  The Ottoman emirate, the Janissaries and Bektaşî sufism 10
  The Kızılbaş challenge                12
  Ebu’s-Suud: the formation of a persecuting society? 15
  Shiism in Ottoman thought             17
  The Shiites of Jabal ‘Amil and the clerical migration to Iran 20
  The Shiite holy places in Iraq        26
  Urban Shiism and the ashraf           28
  Conclusion: what ideology?            29

2 The invention of Lebanon: Ottoman governance in the coastal highlands, 1568–1636  31
  The ‘classical system’ of rule        33
  Ottoman sovereignty in Syria         36
  Emir titles and ilizam tax farming   40
  Shiism in the Bekaa Valley           43
  The Harfush emirs of Baalbek         45
  The nexus between imperial and local interests 49
  The contest with Fakhr al-Din ibn Ma’n 53
  Conclusion: what emirate?            56

3 Mount Lebanon under Shiite rule: the Hamada ‘emirate’, 1641–1685  58
  Shiite tribalism in Mt Lebanon       59
  Ottoman tax regimes in Tripoli       64
  The rise of the Hamadas              68
viii Contents

The narrative of Shiite tyranny 71
The Köprülü era 74
The Hamadas’ iltizam commissions 77
The Hamadas in court 82
Conclusion: the fragile consensus 85

4 The reshaping of authority: the Shiites and the state in crisis, 1685–1699 88
The Shiite rebellion 89
The Khazins and the Maronite ‘recolonization’ of the Kisrawan 92
The expansion of the Druze emirate 96
The imperial punitive campaign 100
Changing paradigms of provincial administration 104
Shiism and Ottoman tribal control 109
Conclusion: a new era? 114

5 Jabal ‘Amil in the Ottoman period: the origins of ‘south Lebanon’, 1666–1781 117
Sidon and Safad under Ottoman rule 119
Shiism in Jabal ‘Amil 121
Retreat in the northern mukataas 123
The ‘Ali al-Saghirs of the Bilad Bishara 126
The struggle against Shihabi hegemony 128
Nasif Nassar and Zahir al-‘Umar 131
The forging of Lebanese history 137
Cezzar and the Shiites 139
Conclusion: a golden age? 143

6 From dependence to redundancy: the decline of Shiite rule in Tripoli and the Bekaa, 1699–1788 146
The Voyvodalı of the Bekaa 147
The ‘Kızılbaş Mukataa’ of Mt Lebanon 151
The Hamadas and the Maronite Church 156
The Lebanese Order 159
The inversion of power 161
The Shihabi emirate’s Shiite subsidiary in Baalbek 164
The ‘national uprising’ 168
The Shiites under Shihabi rule 171
Conclusion: the logic of Lebanon 174

Conclusion 176
The triumph of Lebanism 179

Bibliography 181
Index 195
Lists of illustrations and maps

Illustrations
1. Northern Bekaa Valley. Photo: Stefan Winter. 44
2. Wadi ‘Almat (Futuh/Bilad Jubayl). Photo: Stefan Winter. 81
4. Sayyidat al-Haqla church, Kisrawan. Fresco said to depict a Shiite woman with a sick child praying to the Virgin Mary. Reprinted by permission of the Loyola University Press, Chicago. 115
5. Peninsula of Tyre, early twentieth century. Reprinted by permission of the Loyola University Press, Chicago. 133
8. Musayliha castle. Photo: Stefan Winter. 153

Maps
1. The Syrian coastal highland region: general overview 32
2. The sancaq of Tripoli and Mt Lebanon 66
3. Jabal ‘Amil 118
Acknowledgements

Research for the present book began in Istanbul in the summer of 1999 and has taken me to many places, literally and metaphorically, over the years. It is a pleasure to finally acknowledge those who have offered me their time, support and criticism and contributed to seeing this work to fruition: Nabil Al-Tikriti and Charles Wilkins, my stalwart companions in the archives of Istanbul, Damascus and beyond; Ridwan al-Sayyid, Talal Majdhub and especially ‘Abir Bassam, who helped guide my research in Lebanon; and Marco Salati, Astrid Meier, Stefan Knost, Erdem Kabadayı and Sabine Mohasseb Saliba for their aid and suggestions. I am also grateful to the directors of the Başbakanlık archives in Istanbul, the library of the Lebanese University and Qasr Nawfal in Tripoli, the Archives Nationales in Paris and the Sächsische Landesbibliothek in Dresden for permission to use their collections. Institutional support was provided by the Institut Français du Proche-Orient in Damascus, the German Orient-Institut in Beirut and of course the University of Chicago, where an early version of this study was accepted as a doctoral thesis in 2002; warm thanks are due to my advisor, Cornell Fleischer, as well as to John Woods and Jim Reilly. The Fonds québécois de la recherche sur la société et la culture (FQRSC) generously supported both the initial and later research for this project. I owe a particular debt of gratitude to Bernard Heyberger for his counsel and for inviting me to present my revised findings at the École pratique des hautes études (EPHE) in the summer of 2007, and I have also benefitted from Ussama Makdisi’s insightful comments as well as from Marigold Acland’s professionalism in guiding the final draft through publication. For all the remaining shortcomings I alone am to blame. Most of all, I express my thanks to Mafalda Ade, for preparing the maps for this book, for her shared scholarly interests and many critical discussions of my work and for so much more than can be put in words.
Note on transliterations

This study draws on source materials in Turkish, Arabic and several western European languages. Modern Turkish spelling has been used for administrative terms and names of officials of the Ottoman Empire, whereas the modified International Journal of Middle East Studies system for transliterating Arabic has been used for people and most place names in Lebanon and Syria. The point of the study, however, is that many individuals and institutions were proper to both contexts, so that I have thought it best to alternate between systems, and by the same token to use modern standard Kurmanci orthography for names of identifiably Kurdish groups and individuals, depending on the context or on the sources being quoted. This entails a certain number of subjective choices and inconsistencies, for which I ask the reader’s indulgence.
Abbreviations

AE    Affaires Étrangères
MD    Mühimme Defteri
MM    Maliyeden Müdver
ȘD    Şikayet Defteri
TD    Tahrir Defteri