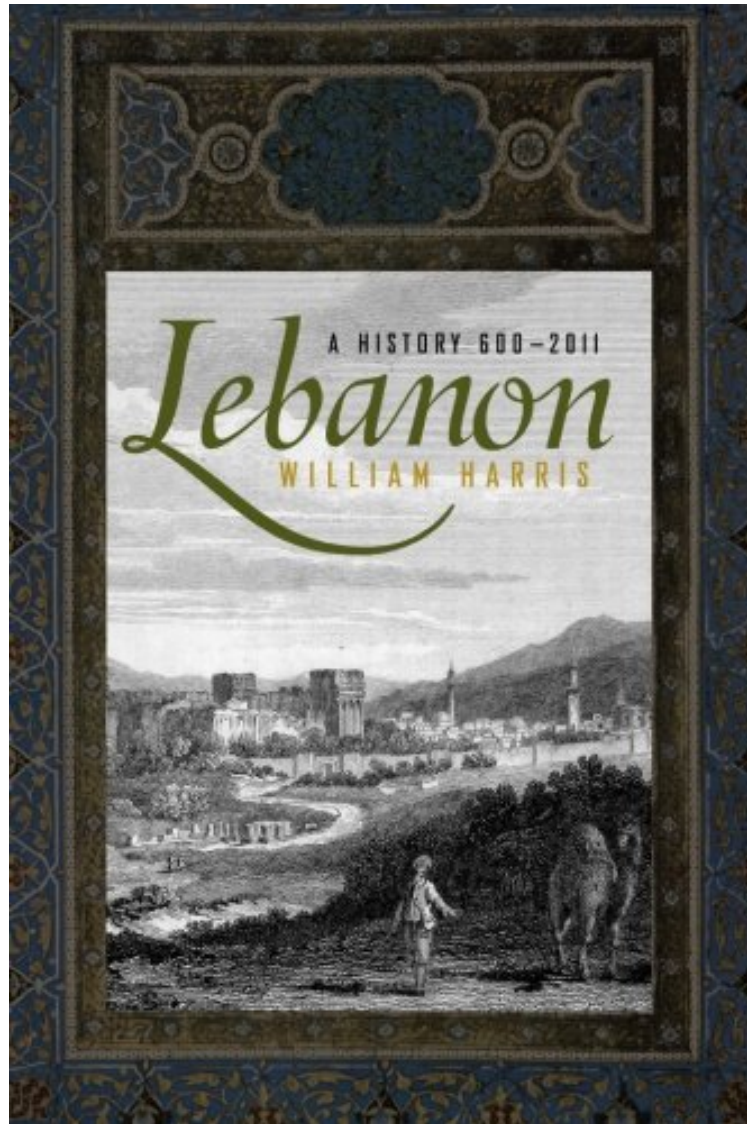


(Free) Lebanon: A History, 600 - 2011 (Studies in Middle Eastern History)

## Lebanon: A History, 600 - 2011 (Studies in Middle Eastern History)

*William Harris*

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**William Harris : Lebanon: A History, 600 - 2011 (Studies in Middle Eastern History)** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Lebanon: A History, 600 - 2011 (Studies in Middle Eastern History):

4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. An excellent introduction to Lebanon's history almost up to today By David B. Really good look at the personalities, history and actions, in only lightly masked circum-speak, of the 1400 years since the Romans/Byzantines were forced out of what today is Lebanon. The family names of the tribal leaders mark one of the hidden (from outsiders) continuities of Lebanon and its politics and history which this book lays out

very clearly. A good place to start for anyone wanting to understand why Lebanon is the way it is today, and why the Lebanese do so very well - once they leave Lebanon. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. A lot of information presented in a rush. By Susan Singh A lot of information presented in a rush. It seems to assume the reader already has some knowledge of the subject 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Four Stars By roger gradney wished it was a little more indepth.

In this impressive synthesis, William Harris narrates the history of the sectarian communities of Mount Lebanon and its vicinity. He offers a fresh perspective on the antecedents of modern multi-communal Lebanon, tracing the consolidation of Lebanon's Christian, Muslim, and Islamic derived sects from their origins between the sixth and eleventh centuries. The identities of Maronite Christians, Twelver Shia Muslims, and Druze, the mountain communities, developed alongside assertions of local chiefs under external powers from the Umayyads to the Ottomans. The chiefs began interacting in a common arena when Druze lord Fakhr al-Din Ma'n achieved domination of the mountain within the Ottoman imperial framework in the early seventeenth century. Harris knits together the subsequent interplay of the elite under the Sunni Muslim Shihab relatives of the Ma'ns after 1697 with demographic instability as Maronites overtook Shia as the largest community and expanded into Druze districts. By the 1840s many Maronites conceived the common arena as their patrimony. Maronite/Druze conflict ensued. Modern Lebanon arose out of European and Ottoman intervention in the 1860s to secure sectarian peace in a special province. In 1920, after the Ottoman collapse, France and the Maronites enlarged the province into the modern country, with a pluralism of communal minorities headed by Maronite Christians and Sunni Muslims. The book considers the flowering of this pluralism in the mid-twentieth century, and the strains of new demographic shifts and of social resentment in an open economy. External intrusions after the 1967 Arab-Israeli war rendered Lebanon's contradictions unmanageable and the country fell apart. Harris contends that Lebanon has not found a new equilibrium and has not transcended its sects. In the early twenty-first century there is an uneasy duality: Shia have largely recovered the weight they possessed in the sixteenth century, but Christians, Sunnis, and Druze are two-thirds of the country. This book offers readers a clear understanding of how modern Lebanon acquired its precarious social intricacy and its singular political character.

"William Harris has written an expansive political and institutional history of Lebanon.....Offers a historical context and a set of arguments for considering the past and present of this complex, divided and vulnerable country....The book is well-sourced....The writing is clear and crisp [and] the reader never loses track of the narrative's thread....Harris's account offers much food for thought." --James A. Reilly, Middle East Media and Book s "This book is a welcome addition to the historiography of the modern Middle East.. [A]n impressive achievement....Harris seems as much at home in the medieval and early modern periods as he is in the more modern and contemporary period" --Peter Sluglett, Middle East Journal "This book is a major contribution to the social history of modern Lebanon." --A. J. Abraham, Journal of Third World Studies "This book will provide scholars with a useful and overdue reference." --T.J. Gorton, Times Literary Supplement "One of the few recent works in English on the complete history of Lebanon in the Islamic period. Most books have strengths and shortcomings. Harris's study is almost completely free of the latter. An excellent volume." --Juan Romero, Middle Eastern Studies "The history of Lebanon remains culturally and religiously complex, and with this work, Lebanon: A History, William Harris presents the reader with both a blueprint and a roadmap. Wither well-written prose and clear evidence, the author enables readers to navigate and unlock the labyrinth of Lebanese history -its people and its culture." --Teaching History "Fifteen hundred years of history is a monumentally long and perilous journey that any historian, gifted and competent as he may be, would be foolhardy to undertake. Yet Harris promises and delivers history in the *longue dure*, in a gripping seamless narrative, bringing clarity, class, and depth to a story a rare few can tell without disorienting themselves and losing their readers along the way....A meticulous, ambitious, and compelling story of Lebanon." --Franck Salameh, The Levantine "William Harris, a recognized scholar of the Levant, provides a nuanced narrative of this often fractious nation."--Arab Studies Quarterly "This Herculean effort is the best book about Lebanon to come out in the past half decade. Intense at the beginning, where the author had to grapple with a scarcity of resources and the confusing jumble and black hole of ethnicities in the post-Roman collapse, the book is compact in the second half, which Lebanon became central to Roman attempts to penetrate and hold the Levant. The book is compelling, easily readable, digestible, and understandable. Essential." --CHOICE "A successful account that provides much of value for those interested not only on Lebanese history but also that of the Middle East. The limitations of Ottoman control and complexities of ethnic and confessional politics emerge clearly." --The Historical Association "A signal contribution to the study of Lebanon. William Harris savors that country and knows its ways. With this book, he steps forth as one of the very best historians of Lebanon. With no ax to grind, this is history in the finest tradition."--Fouad Ajami, Hoover Institution, Stanford University "William Harris discovered Lebanon in its darkest hours, and became an intimate. Few are better qualified to write an overview of Lebanese history, as he has done here in this excellent book, the outcome of decades of such intimacy."--Michael Young, author of *The Ghosts of Martyrs Square: An Eyewitness Account of Lebanon's Life Struggle* "Lebanon is defined by its religious diversity, its communities long predating the modern state. In this lucid

and engaging new history, William Harris traces the evolution of the Christian, Muslim, and Druze communities of Mount Lebanon over fourteen centuries, the better to understand the dangerous sectarian democracy of modern Lebanon. A bold and authoritative analysis based on Arabic and European sources that will guide Western readers through the maze of Lebanese history and politics."-- Eugene Rogan, The Middle East Centre, University of Oxford

About the Author William Harris is Professor of Politics at the University of Otago. He has taught at Princeton University, Haigazian University College in Beirut, Middle East Technical University in Ankara, and the University of Exeter. He is the author of *The Levant: A Fractured Mosaic* and *Faces of Lebanon: Sects, Wars, and Global Extensions*.