



The Ottoman Scramble for Africa: Empire and Diplomacy in the Sahara and the Hijaz

By Mostafa Minawi

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The Ottoman Scramble for Africa is the first book to tell the story of the Ottoman Empire's expansionist efforts during the age of high imperialism. Following key representatives of the sultan on their travels across Europe, Africa, and Arabia at the close of the nineteenth century, it takes the reader from Istanbul to Berlin, from Benghazi to Lake Chad Basin to the Hijaz, and then back to Istanbul. It turns the spotlight on the Ottoman Empire's expansionist strategies in Africa and its increasingly vulnerable African and Arabian frontiers. Drawing on previously untapped Ottoman archival evidence, Mostafa Minawi examines how the Ottoman participation in the Conference of Berlin and involvement in an aggressive competition for colonial possessions in Africa were part of a self-reimagining of this once powerful global empire. In so doing, Minawi redefines the parameters of agency in late-nineteenth-century colonialism to include the Ottoman Empire and turns the typical framework of a European colonizer and a non-European colonized on its head. Most importantly, Minawi offers a radical revision of nineteenth-century Middle East history by providing a counternarrative to the "Sick Man of Europe" trope, challenging the idea that the Ottomans were passive observers of the great European powers' negotiations over solutions to the so-called Eastern Question.

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Editorial Review

Review

"*The Ottoman Scramble for Africa* successfully demonstrates the value of a transcontinental approach to the history of empire. Mostafa Minawi has crafted a well-written and richly textured narrative that invites deeper engagement and conversations among scholars of Africa, Europe, and the Middle East." (Judith Byfield)

"In this engaging and timely study, Mostafa Minawi demonstrates that the Ottoman Empire was capable of reinventing itself in the age of New Imperialism and finding alternative ways to compete with European powers for colonial possessions in Africa. This book will leave the reader with a richer understanding of the 'Scramble for Africa.'" (Janet Klein *The University of Akron*)

"Readers of Mostafa Minawi's *The Ottoman Scramble for Africa* are in for a treat. What starts out as the genealogy of a powerful Damascene Arab notable family evolves into a fascinating tale of Ottoman global ambitions in Libya and central Africa in the 1890s. With an engaging story, well-grounded in a number of archives, this book is a welcome piece of the puzzle surrounding late Ottoman colonialism." (Virginia Aksan)

About the Author

Mostafa Minawi is Assistant Professor of History at Cornell University.

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