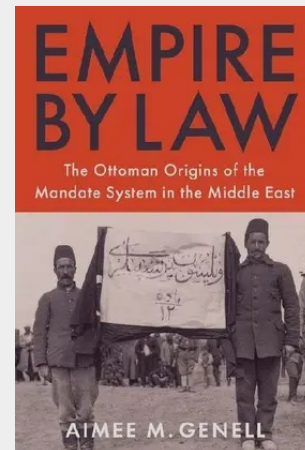


Empire by Law

The Ottoman Origins of the Mandate System in the Middle East

The Ottoman Empire long used flexible administrative arrangements to govern its vast domains. Starting in the 1830s, however, European intervention in Ottoman affairs resulted in the emergence of a new type of negotiated province. The "privileged provinces," which included Egypt and Mt. Lebanon, enjoyed levels of administrative autonomy that were unparalleled not only within the Ottoman domains but also in late nineteenth-century imperial systems more broadly. *Empire by Law* reveals the importance of the Ottoman Empire's autonomous provinces, both within the empire and in the history of international relations. Aimee M. Genell argues that these provinces became the key arena in which possibilities for sovereignty and imperial control were negotiated and tested in the Middle East. She traces how the Ottoman state turned to international law to maintain control over parts of the empire that European powers attempted to wrest from it. Genell demonstrates that the concept of autonomy provided an important alternative model for imperial organization among the empire's diverse subjects, even as successive Ottoman governments tried to curtail it. She argues that the Ottoman model of autonomy became the foundation for the mandate system established in the Middle East after World War I, with lasting and catastrophic consequences for the region. Bridging legal, international, and imperial history, this book shows how Ottoman practices of governance shaped the Middle Eastern political order.

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