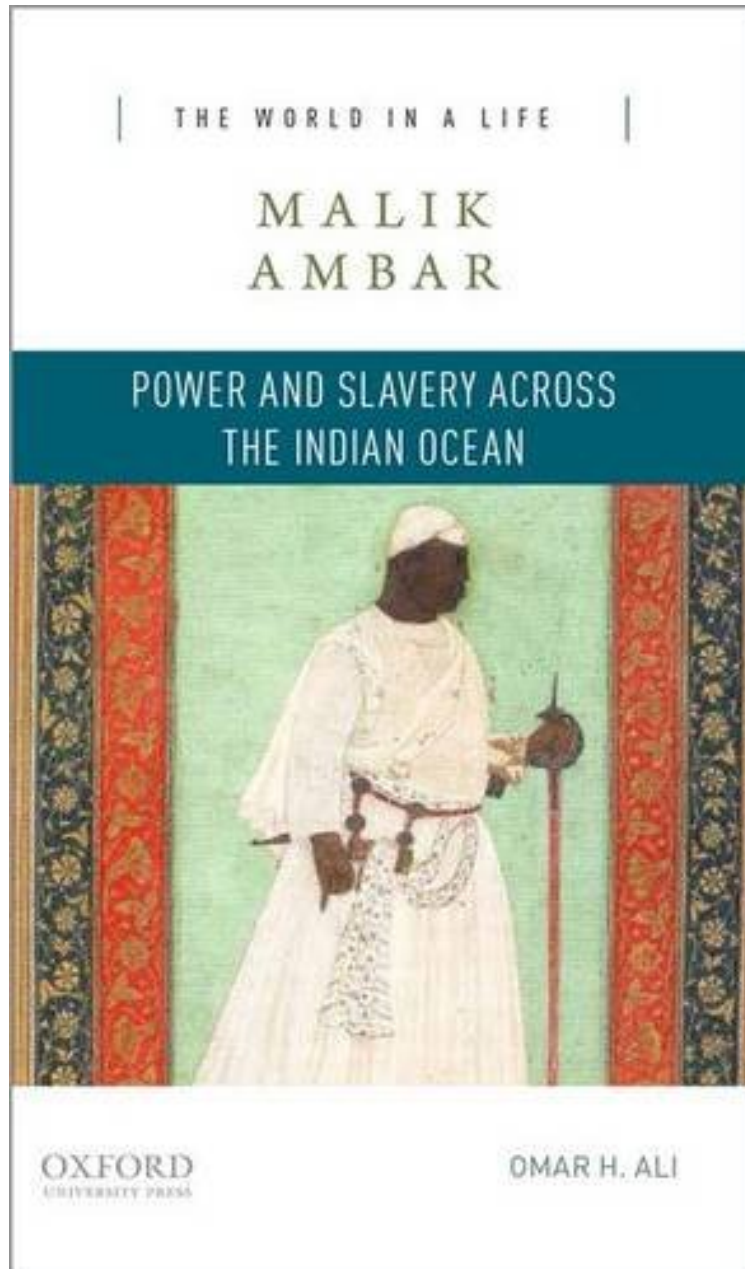


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## Malik Ambar: Power and Slavery across the Indian Ocean (The World in a Life Series)

*Omar H. Ali*

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## Slavery across the Indian Ocean (The World in a Life Series):

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Part of The World in a Life series, this brief, inexpensive text provides insight into the life of slave soldier Malik Ambar. Malik Ambar: Power and Slavery across the Indian Ocean offers a rare look at an individual who began in obscurity in eastern Africa and reached the highest levels of South Asian political and military affairs in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. Ambar's rise from slavery in East Africa to ruler in South Asia sheds light on the diverse mix of people, products, and practices that shaped the Indian Ocean world during the early modern period. Originally from Ethiopia--historically called Abyssinia--Ambar is best known for having defended the Deccan from being occupied by the Mughals during the first quarter of the seventeenth century. His ingenuity as a military leader, his diplomatic skills, and his land-reform policies contributed to his success in keeping the Deccan free of Mughal imperial rule. We live in a global age where big concepts like "globalization" often tempt us to forget the personal side of the past. The titles in The World in a Life series aim to revive these meaningful lives. Each one shows us what it was like to live on a world historical stage. Brief, inexpensive, and thematic, each book can be read in a week, fit within a wide range of curricula, and shed insight into a particular place or time. Four to six short primary sources at the end of each volume sharpen the reader's view of an individual's impact on world history.

"Writing in an engaging and imaginative style, Omar H. Ali does a remarkable job of reconstructing the most scholarly and accessible account yet published of this remarkable African leader. Drawing upon both previous studies of Malik Ambar and a rich trove of primary documents from Indian history, he further enhances our understanding of Ambar with field research in both Ethiopia and India."--Ned Alpers, University of California, Los Angeles "In a lively and well-researched narrative Omar H. Ali follows the footsteps of an exceptional man while painting a vivid portrait of a unique and complex society molded by the cultures, languages, and religions of multiple continents. It is a fascinating story of slavery, freedom, power, and transformations."--Sylviane A. Diouf, Director of the Lapidus Center for the Historical Analysis of Transatlantic Slavery and Curator at the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture of The New York Public Library "While the story of Malik Ambar's fascinating life is a key to understanding major cultural and political exchanges across the Indian Ocean, it is also the moving and inspiring tale of an African boy who grows up to become an Indian king. This succinct biography by Omar H. Ali allows the reader to plunge into the cosmopolitan world of the Deccan courts, where Abyssinian slaves and noblemen played an important role in political and military affairs. Ambar's talents, which extended from warfare to diplomacy, placed him at the center of events that shaped the seventeenth century. This book adds new perspectives to his early life and to the complex forces that took him across the Indian Ocean, and offers fresh insight into how he found his place in India."--Navina Haidar, Curator, Department of Islamic Art, The Metropolitan Museum of Art "Malik Ambar was an extraordinary individual and the details of Ali's short and highly readable biography showcase this well. Although exceptional in his achievements, the patterns of Malik's life parallel those of many Africans who became part of this wider Indian Ocean diaspora. Details of Malik's life encourage comparative history questions about how shifting politics, economies, and notions of identity, created routes for social mobility and emancipation for certain Africans."--Andrea Felber Seligman, City College of New York, in World History Connected (Spring 2017) About the Author Omar H. Ali is Associate Professor of Comparative African Diaspora History and Interim Dean of Lloyd International Honors College at The University of North Carolina at Greensboro. He is the author of several books, including the forthcoming Islam in the Indian Ocean World: A Brief History with Documents (2016).