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BUCHBESPRECHUNGEN

Karen Barkey: Empire of Difference. The Ottomans in Comparative Perspective, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008, 342 p.

Reviewed by Nora Lafi, Berlin

Karen Barkey, the author of Bandits and Bureaucrats: The Ottoman Route to State Centralization (Ithaca, 1994) – a book that is notable for influencing the present trend in Ottoman studies through its aims at reconsidering the roots of the Ottoman state-building process – exhibits a new step in her research on the very nature of the Ottoman Empire with her book Empire of Difference: The Ottomans in Comparative Perspective. Within her preface, she recalls touching memories about her family history and its connection with Istanbul: from her grandfather, an Ottoman citizen who took her to eat at the restaurant Borsa and an "Oriental version of the Orient" (p. IX) to her father, an Atatürkist modernist, an "Occidental version of the Orient" (p. X). After having illustrated in her previous book the importance of negotiation and mediation in the building process of the imperial apparel, she wishes with this book to confront the theme of the longevity of the Ottoman Empire. Suitably, Karen Barkey's main interests are the "mechanisms and machinery of empire" (p. X).

The first part of the book consists of an explication of the main features of the Ottoman imperial model, which originates from a very efficient definition of the Ottoman Empire: "[A] 'negotiated' enterprise where the basic configuration of relationships between imperial authorities and peripheries is constructed piece meal in a different fashion for each periphery, creating a patchwork pattern of relations with structural holes between peripheries. In that construction we see the architecture of empire emerge: a hub-and-spoke structure of state-periphery relations, where the direct and indirect vertical relations of imperial integration coexist with horizontal relations of segmentation" (p. 1). In this introductory chapter, K. Barkey also presents the "analytic framework" (p. 9) she intends to apply to her subject and imperial comparativist perspective.

On this basis, the second chapter is devoted to the early Ottoman period and the roots of Ottoman imperial governance.1 Karen Barkey's main point in this chapter is to refute the myth of the building of an empire by unorganized Turkish raiders: "The construction of this formidable political apparatus of authority was not just the result of fire, plunder, rape, death and

destruction. It was also the result of brokerage among different religious, social, and economic groups that formed new social relations, combining diverse ideas and practices and forging new identities" (p. 28). Indeed, brokerage is the key word of this chapter, with which the author illustrates the various modalities of the invention of a new governance based on different heritages from the comparison between the emergence of the Ottomans and the Russians as presented in the work of A. Kappeler. She starts from a description of the frontier between Byzantium and the Seljuks, trying to understand why, among various beylik, the one progressively organized by Osman (1290–1326) and his son Orhan (1326–1359) emerged and managed in a little more than a century to overwhelm the existing power map. Karen Barkey proposes an understanding of these phases that opposes the one inherited from Paul Wittek's analysis, which is based upon the concept of Holy War and in general the religious gâzî ideology, as well as the one promoted by Fuad Köprölü, which refers to a mythical Turkic ethnic identity. Discussing the historiographical decline of the interpretative trends of Cemal Kafadar, Linda Darling and Colin Imber, she also introduces important nuances into the now classical interpretation, as based upon organizational innovation, proposed by Halil Inalcık. Though agreeing with H. Lowry on the complexification effort made by the interpretative model, K. Barkey explains why she cannot be satisfied with the existing literature. With reference to Pierre Bourdieu, for her the key feature was the ability of the early Ottomans to "transform existing horizontal ties into vertical relations of power" (p. 33) and provide for the "brokerage across networks, recombination through alliances and key moves from one network to another" (p. 34). Everything but a mechanical march towards imperiality and territorial sovereignty. She applies this frame of mind to all the early periods of Ottoman development, and, with reference to the work of Klaus-Peter Matschke, underlines how the relationship with Byzantium was far more complex than a mere confrontation.

Particularly interesting in this chapter is also the analysis of the networks built by the early Ottomans. Karen Barkey presents two very telling graphic reconstructions of the personal networks of Osman and Orhan (pp. 49 and 54). On the questions of religious cohabitation within the new structure, the author underlines both the deep interpenetration - as part of the accommodation process, for example, early Ottoman often marrying Christian princesses, and the progressive building of a culture of differentiation. In this regard, "The boundaries that were established, however, never functioned as rigid and impermeable markers of difference" (p. 62). For Barkey, however, the reign of Murad II (1421–1444) marks a shift, with the Ottomans becoming "more confident in their own local networks, their own localities and identities, and their ability to dominate" (p. 63).

The third chapter, "Becoming an Empire," examines the construction of the state apparel between the 15th and 17th centuries. It starts with the conquest of Constantinople in 1453 and a definition of the new process that began then: "The empire that was built after 1453 became a robust, flexible and adaptative political entity where a patrimonial center, a strong army, and a

dependent and assimilated state elite interconnected with many diverse and multilingual populations ensconced in their ecological and territorial niches. The Ottoman imperial order was to be found in the three components of the empire – legitimacy, control over elites and resources, and the maintenance of diversity – each forged through the relations between state forces and social forces, center and periphery, state and regional elites, and central officials and local populations" (p. 67-68). This is all the strength of K. Barkey's work to put the governance of diversity at the very centre of the definition of Ottoman imperiality. After a short digression on the way institutions evolve – with reference to authors like Kathleen Thelen and Paul Pierson, but with a limited perspective on the question of the Byzantine heritage – in this chapter the author successively explores the different aspects of the Ottoman imperial dimension, such as the constitution of the Imperial Domains and the establishment of the army as a strong social element. The main focus is, however, the question of the management of frontiers and the establishment of provincial rule. Similar to before, diversity is a key word in K. Barkey's analysis. She also discusses the traditional dichotomy between core provinces (tımarlı) and outer provinces (salyanelı), insisting on how the Ottomans generally adapted their governance model according to the results of the negotiation processes with local social forces, with the possible exception of Crete. For Karen Barkey, the key paradigm is "the vertical integration of elites and corporate groups into the political system" (p. 93).

This leads her first to an interpretation of the rhetorical unifying concept of such a diverse system, the nizam-i âlem social balance and order, and then to a discussion of the role of Islam, which she stresses the decisive influence of Islamic religious scholars within Istanbul after the conquest of the Arab provinces in the evolution of the Ottoman concepts of governance. This evolution is, however, less documented in K. Barkey's narration, and therefore perhaps less convincing. To remedy this problem she could have focused on the concrete modalities of accommodation and negotiation, – such as petitions (şikayet) and their administrative and political treatment in Istanbul by a specific bureau, which was at the core of both the decision-making process and the growth of the bureaucratic apparel, instead of general ideas. Nonetheless, the chapter remains very useful in its attempt to propose a new model, less static and more dynamic, for an analysis of the construction of Ottoman imperial ideology and practice.

Conceived as the core of the book, the fourth chapter, with tolerance and difference as key paradigms, proposes a broad overview of what is the very nature of Ottoman imperial governance. It begins with a reference to John Locke's appreciation of toleration in an Ottoman context, and a quote of Voltaire that praises Ottoman religious toleration. Opposed to what R.I. Moore called a "persecuting society" (the West), K. Barkey underlines how the Ottoman Empire "pursued policies of accommodation (istimalet)" (p. 110). Instead of developing culturalist theories about Islam and toleration, she analyses Ottoman toleration as a highly imperial feature: "Toleration is neither a quality nor a modern form of 'multiculturalism' in the imperial setting. Rather, it is a means of rule, of ex-

tending, consolidating, and enforcing state power… Toleration added to the empire" (p. 110). This perspective, though, does not prevent the author from taking into consideration the episodes of religious persecution the empire experienced. However, she regards them, at least for the first three centuries of the empire, more as moments of crisis and adaptation of the system than expressions of an ontological animosity, with toleration remaining "the negotiated outcome of intergroup relations" (p. 114). The chapter then develops an understanding of the mechanisms of management of differences.

In the fifth chapter about dissent and the sixth about the "eventful" 18th century, Karen Barkey manages to avoid any risk of Ottoman angelism. Using the example of Şeyh Bedreddîn, the kızılbaş and the Celalis, as well as the imperial response to Islamic ultra-orthodoxy or Jewish messianism in the 17th century, she underlines how alternative forms of religiosity were a challenge to the negotiated imperial order. This leads her to view the 18th century as the turning point in Ottoman history, almost the end of a golden age.

In point of fact, Part II examines the transformations of the 18th century. It begins with a chronological chapter, the main milestones of which are the Edirne events of 1703, the Patrona Halil revolt of 1730 and the Sened-i Ittifak of 1808. These events are presented as elements of the major changes in what made the Ottoman balance, which she described in the first part of the book. Chapter seven is then logically on the construction of new, or newly interpreted, imperial governance features: tax farming and the refashioning of the relationship between the empire and local elite. This chapter ends with considerations about what the author calls "the transitional modernity of notables" (p. 256).

The last chapter of the book is devoted to the struggle of the Ottoman Empire with the concept of the nation-state, when "complexity, that had been a basis of legitimacy, became a source of dispersed loyalty" (p. 295), with a focus on what K. Barkey describes as "three options of identity" (p. 290): the Tanzimat, Abdülhamid II and the Young Turks, as well as on the process of state centralization. This final narrative, to which much less attention is given than to the previous periods, somewhat recounts the narrative system the author built to what she had been struggling with for almost 300 pages: the inertia of topoi. The 19th century is indeed seen as a long period of decline, whose roots lie in the very nature of an empire unable to fight with its new organization against localisms and nationalisms. However, the reforms of the Tanzimat and of the Constitutional Period – the content of which was negotiated along communication lines between centre and periphery, an element typical of the old regime (a negotiation again, the Istanbul BOA archives show, and not the mere importation of a ready-to-use modernity) – were maybe also an illustration of the specific nature of the Ottoman Empire. They created, where the Ottomans were able to fight European imperialism, after phases of clash and tension, a new negotiated balance, which in many cases lasted for decades. In the end, it took an event of unprecedented force in the history of mankind, World War I, to destroy the renewed system. Its decline was not yet sealed in 1800.

Apart from this final interpretative point and from the fact that K. Barkey's narration could have made use of more archival resources, the very nature of which is an illustration of her main thesis and could have consolidated the rhetorical construction, Empire of Difference: The Ottomans in Comparative Perspective will certainly affirm itself as a milestone in the current renewal of interpretations of Ottoman history.

Note:
1 An issue also addressed by Heath W. Lowry, The Nature of the Early Ottoman State, Albany, 2003.

Joachim Baur: Die Musealisierung der Migration. Einwanderungsmuseen und die Inszenierung der multikulturellen Nation, Bielefeld: transcipt Verlag, 2009, 408 S.

Rezensiert von
Kerstin Weber, Berlin

„Die Musealisierung der Migration hat Konjunktur," so beginnt Baurs Monographie, die sich in Form von Fallstudien aus den USA, Kanada und Australien mit dem neuartigen Museumstyp des Einwanderungsmuseums auseinandersetzt – einer Institution, deren Auftauchen in der globalen Museumslandschaft wohl kaum länger als zwanzig Jahre zurückreicht und einen regelrechten Aufschwung erlebt. Diesen sieht Baur zum einen getragen von sozial-reformistisch aufgeladenen Erwartungen und Deutungen, die sich von diesem Museumstyp Lösungsansätze für gesellschaftliche „Probleme" erhoffen, etwa dem ebenfalls Konjunktur habenden Thema der Integration, zum anderen von der Hoffnung auf eine „Transnationalisierung der Erinnerungskulturen" und damit einem Aufbrechen allzu einengender nationaler Perspektiven musealer Repräsentation(en) sowie deren Dekonstruktion. Dennoch, trotz der zahlreichen Gründungen von Einwanderungsmuseen und den damit verknüpften Erwartungen, Hoffnungen und Deutungen, ist die wissenschaftliche Auseinandersetzung mit Einwanderung und deren musealer Institutionalisierung bisher eher schmal ausgefallen. Baurs Studie möchte diesem Mangel Abhilfe leisten und das Phänomen des Einwanderungsmuseums erstmals, wie er sagt, „empirisch vermessen" um zu zeigen, dass die museale Repräsentation der Migration nicht automatisch eine Dekonstruktion der Nation bedeutet. Im Gegenteil. Das Verhältnis zwischen der Inszenierung der Migration und der Nation begreift er als ein weitaus Komplexeres. Die Nation steht, so Baurs zentrale These, im Zentrum der Einwanderungsmuseen – sie wird mitnichten „dezentriert" sondern vielmehr „re-zentriert". Die Musealisierung der Migration fungiert als „reformierte Version der Inszenierung des Nationalen im Museum" und wird so zu einer Bühne für eine „Re-Vision" der Nation, die schlussendlich eine Stabilisierung der Nation im Zeichen des Multikulturalismus zum Ziel hat. Zur Überprüfung seines Ausgangsarguments unterzieht Baur das *Ellis Island Immigration Museum* in New York, Canada's *Immigration Museum Pier 21* in Halifax und das *Immigration Museum Melbourne* in drei Kapiteln jeweils einer kritischen und detaillierten Analyse,