

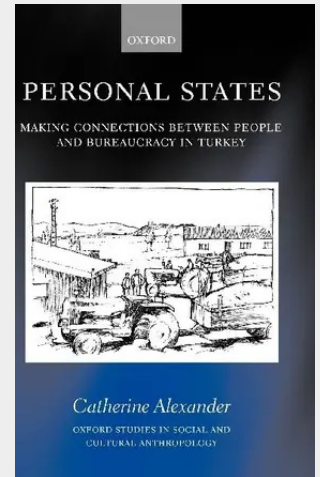
Alexander

Personal States

Making Connections Between People and Bureaucracy in Turkey

Catherine Alexander charts how Turkish people, both within and outside the state bureaucracy, attempt to personalise the impersonality of the state. Based on a detailed study of the nationalized Turkish Sugar Corporation, she considers how people from the highest levels of the state bureaucracy to farming villages understand 'the state', and how, in turn, they imagine themselves to be perceived. The narratives and metaphors used in these constructions draw on resources close to hand such as the material organization of state factory compounds, state personnel encountered in the course of everyday life, and the image of the family structure. By also exploring notions of state and personhood within the highest echelons of the administration itself, Alexander shows how ideas of 'the state' recede once one is actually 'within'. For officials the state becomes other institutions and Ministries with which they have little contact. The continual process of striving to make connections with other groups and people occurs both at all hierarchical levels of the Sugar Corporation and between farmers and factory engineers. This elegant, nuanced ethnography of modernity will cause scholars of state institutions across a broad range of disciplines radically to rethink what 'the state' actually is, and the relations that create it, thus taking understandings of the state to an entirely new level.

Charting how Turkish people - both within and outside the state bureaucracy - attempt to personalise the impersonality of the state, this elegant, nuanced ethnography will cause scholars of state institutions across a broad range of disciplines radically to rethink what the entity called 'the state' actually is, the relations that create it, and to acknowledge its materiality, thus taking understandings of the state to an entirely new level.



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