

Peasant Uprisings in Roman Gaul and Ottoman Anatolia: A Comparison of the *Bagaudae* and the *Celali* Rebellions

This study offers a comparative analysis of two significant peasant uprisings within the context of imperialism: the *Bagaudae* in Roman Gaul during Late Antiquity and the *Celali* rebellions in Ottoman Anatolia during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries CE. Despite the temporal and geographical distance between these events, both the *Bagaudae* and *Celali* uprisings exhibit notable similarities in their essential characteristics, primarily characterized by peasant groups engaging in armed resistance against progressively exploitative imperial structures. Such similarities offer a valuable opportunity to develop a comparative framework that could deepen our comprehension of imperial structures more broadly. In this regard, a comparative methodology is employed to situate these social phenomena within a broader context of imperial systems, thereby moving away from the prevailing focus on particularism in historical studies. This comparative approach redirects focus from conventional elements of imperial authority and bureaucracy, with the intention of illuminating alternative viewpoints on imperialism that are frequently obscured by teleological assumptions stemming from declension narratives. It also provides opportunities for exploring the complex nature of these rebellions, which encompassed various forms of social unrest from banditry to regional defiance of imperial rule. With this comparative analysis, I seek to establish an effective framework for understanding imperial systems, offering insights into the dynamics of center-periphery relations, the issue of negotiation of power, and the cyclical nature of peasant insurrections in imperial contexts. In this manner, I aim to achieve a more nuanced understanding of imperialism by examining phenomena that are often perceived as exterior to state structures, while, in fact, they are deeply interconnected with imperial practices.

Keywords: Imperialism, Roman Empire, Ottoman Empire, peasant uprisings, comparative history

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