



# **The Social Production of Indifference: Exploring the Symbolic Roots of Western Bureaucracy**

*Michael Herzfeld*

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Herzfeld argues that "modern" bureaucratically regulated societies are no more "rational" or less "symbolic" than the societies traditionally studied by anthropologists. He suggests that we cannot understand national bureaucracies divorced from local-level ideas about chance, personal character, social relationships and responsibility.

"Herzfeld's book is extremely ambitious and will be of interest to any anthropologist concerned with the study of bureaucracy, organizational and institutional control, symbols and their power, and social conflict. . . . Thoughtful and challenging."—Helen B. Schwartzman, *American Ethnologist*

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