Transnational histories of 'corruption' in Central-South-East Europe (1750-1850)

Fact Sheet

Project Information

TransCorr
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30 September 2028

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€ 2 494 813,00

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€ 2 494 813,00

Coordinated by
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Romania

Objective

Politicians, scholars, and popular writers between 1750 and 1850 routinely characterized South-East-Central Europe as a corrupt political space. A wide range of foreign observers portrayed graft, nepotism, and bribery as endemic. Indigenous critics echoed many of these assessments. Regional insiders and outsiders alike mobilized commentaries on “corruption” for their own political, professional, and personal ends, claiming they could run more honest and efficient administrations, military regimes, and commercial operations than those in power. These notables linked “corruption” to the region’s supposed cultural backwardness and economic under-development. In doing so, public figures naturalized notions of “corruption,” making it appear both widespread and organic in the region—popularizing tropes that have endured right down to the present. Yet, “corruption” is a historically specific concept. TransCorr seeks to construct a history of the idea of “corruption” in Central-
South-East Europe in conjunction with the rise of modernity. It demonstrates how in the context of new ideas about modernity emanating from West Europe, regional leaders reframed a host of traditional customs and practices as corrupt. It examines how Great Power attempts to transform these borderlands into formal and informal imperial provinces further entrenched novel understandings of “corruption”, often pejoratively associating them with the Ottoman legacy. By tracing out this history, TransCorr reveals a genealogy of ideas, discourses, and attitudes that continue to inform analyses of and discussions within the region today. The project brings the study of this geographic area into greater dialogue with a global story of modernization and aligns the region’s historiography with new innovations in the scientific literature. It also reframes contemporary debates on patronage and graft, and reconfigures broader understandings of center-periphery relations within the region and across the continent.

Fields of science

humanities ▶ history and archaeology ▶ history

social sciences ▶ sociology ▶ social issues ▶ corruption

Keywords

Corruption, Transnational history, South-East Europe, Informal empire, Modernity and modernization, State-building, Age of revolutions

Programme(s)

HORIZON.1.1 - European Research Council (ERC)

Topic(s)

ERC-2022-ADG - ERC ADVANCED GRANTS

Call for proposal

ERC-2022-ADG
See other projects for this call

Funding Scheme

HORIZON-ERC - HORIZON ERC Grants

Coordinator

FUNDATIA NOUA EUROPA

Net EU contribution
€ 2 494 813,00

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Region
Macroregiunea Trei > București-Ilfov > București

Activity type
Research Organisations

Links
Contact the organisation
Website
Participation in EU R&I programmes
HORIZON collaboration network

Other funding
€ 0,00

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