

Fifth Annual Conference of the Institute for East and Southeast European Studies
(IOS, Regensburg)

Corruption in Eastern/Southeastern Europe and Latin America: Comparative Perspectives

29 June – 1 July 2017, IOS, Regensburg (Germany)

In much of today's media discourse, corruption serves as a short-hand explanation for almost every political problem. Low levels of development, social injustice, a lack of security or even setbacks in the struggle against terrorism – in all these fields corruption is seen as a key factor operating in the background. The social sciences, and to some degree the humanities as well, have responded to this trend by intensifying research on the topics of corruption and governance. While previous research has often been quantitative and normative, newer work takes the difficulties and complexities of transforming „corrupt“ into „clean“ orders more seriously and tries to understand why certain practices persist even if the institutional framework is changed. Other scholars, particularly in the humanities, explore discourses on corruption, considering them a political strategy against those labeled as „corrupt“.

Against this background, we are looking for contributions from disciplines such as history, anthropology, economics, political science or sociology which reflect these current shifts and try to go beyond them. Especially we encourage qualitative approaches, focusing on practices and perspectives of „corrupt“ actors and public discourse on corruption. We also invite researchers interested in more diachronic perspectives, trying to understand how the current notion of corruption came into existence, exploring what historical settings encouraged or discouraged “corrupt” behavior, and delving into the development of anti-corruption measures.

The conference strongly encourages comparative perspectives. In the case of Eastern and Southeastern Europe, historical legacies of the region – such as Ottoman, Czarist, or socialist rule – are believed to be at the root of the corruption issue. But these assumptions cannot be verified without comparison. Latin America, for example, experienced completely different types of government but here too, the past is frequently blamed for the present predicament. Comparisons between these two regions, both semi-peripheries that went through nation building processes at roughly the same time, might help us to come up with better explanations. For this reason, we explicitly invite researchers working on corruption in Latin America to contribute to this conference with either case studies or comparative work.

Confirmed keynote speakers: Alena Ledenova (UCL London), Jens Ivo Engels (TU Darmstadt), Johann Graf Lambsdorff (University of Passau).

Deadline for submissions: 31 January 2017

Submissions are to be sent through our application portal https://k11079.coveto.de/public/bewerbung/?id=32&i18nLocale=en_GB

They must include

- the title of the presentation
- an abstract (max. 300 words)
- a one-page CV.

The conference language is English. IOS Regensburg will cover travel costs (up to 500 EUR) and accommodation of presenters. For questions, please contact annualconference2017@ios-regensburg.de

Conveners: Klaus Buchenau, Dragoş Radu