From Informality to Corruption (1817-2018): Serbia and Croatia in Comparison

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Problem description and targets

• Corruption frequently seen as stable, time-transcending (static view)
• Corruption considered as action that needs to be combated rather than understood (normative view)

Our project...
⇒ wants to expand this static and normative view
⇒ wants to explore how the phenomena have changed over time
⇒ wants to question how informal practices and communication on them have changed according to historical circumstances
⇒ focus on scandals
Research setting

• Informality *and* corruption
  - Against purely normative views
  - informality neutral, corruption derogative

• Serbia *and* Croatia
  - Different historical backgrounds (Ottoman, Habsburg, Venice etc.)
  - Different (typical) patterns of informal practices
  - Both with strong phases of transformation in past 200 years; convergence?
Research team

- **History**
  - „Leading role“
  - Exploring and interlinking different phases over time

- **Business / Management**
  - World of business as key area to understand informality and corruption
  - Focus on present time (since 1989)

- **Linguistics**
  - Speaking about corruption (over time)
  - Analysis of lexemes and semantics
Three open positions...

- **Historical Subproject**: Corruption in Serbia and Croatia in the "short" 20th century, 1914–1989; Project Supervisor: Prof. Dr. Klaus Buchenau
- **Business Subproject**: Corruption in Serbia and Croatia since 1990; Project Supervisor: Prof. Dr. Thomas Steger
- **Linguistic Subproject**: The historical semantics of informality — empirical studies on the patterns of word usage in Serbian and Croatian press texts 1919–2018; Project Supervisor: Prof. Dr. Björn Hansen