



School for Humanities and Social Sciences (SHSS)

Transcultural Studies

Europe's Un/Deserving: Moralizations of Inequality in Comparative Perspective

(Research Project funded by the SNSF)

Europe faces a paradox. In a time of overaccumulation and unprecedented wealth, its distribution seems to become ever more selective. This selectiveness takes specific forms in the contemporary conjuncture of neo-nationalism, productivism, and gender conservatism within which the question of who deserves what and why becomes a crucial driver of the creation, maintenance, and contestation of inequalities. This project explores un/deservingness as a key and ascending mode of reshaping inequality within the contemporary transformations of European societies. Its aim is to understand un/deservingness registers in their varieties, similarities, and contrasts in three highly contested socio-economic fields, guided by the overall research question: How do claims and debates of un/deservingness play out with regards to citizenship, redistribution, and gender regimes?

This large-scale project takes up timely European developments in three distinctive subprojects: the aftermath of recent policy changes regarding naturalization/dual citizenship in *Switzerland*; tax/welfare reform in *Austria*; and family policy in *Hungary*. Exploring these developments enables us to innovatively and comparatively extend research on migration, welfare, and social reproduction, while focusing not only on those deemed undeserving but also on those with privileged access to resources. The comparative set-up allows us to ask questions about the moralization and culturalization of inequality in contemporary Europe both related to specific cases and on a larger scale.

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