

SYMPOSIUM

November 27, 2019
Meerscheinschlössl, Mozartgasse 3
8010 Graz – Austria

Critical turns in the study of modern Turkey



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Critical turns in the study of modern Turkey

Symposium anlässlich der Verabschiedung von Kerem Öktem als Professor für Südosteuropaforschung und Türkei studien an der Universität Graz

Symposium on the occasion of Kerem Öktem's farewell as Professor of Southeast European Studies and Modern Turkey at the University of Graz

Turkey's recent history abounds with epic critical turns and junctures. Within slightly more than a century, the country has witnessed the arrival of constitutional politics in the context of a pre-modern empire, the demise of that empire together with the institution of the Caliphate, the emergence of a secular and authoritarian nation-state, the introduction of competitive politics, the commitment to a European future, and now, a sharp but uncertain turn towards authoritarianism, Islamist politics and uncertain statehood. These brusque twists and turns seem to imply deep societal, political and demographic ruptures. From another angle, however, Turkey's eventful recent history can be summarised with the epigram *plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose*. Despite incessant upheaval, certain traits of Turkey's society and politics -from authoritarianism to societal violence, from the omnipotent father state to the attrition of the individual and of civil society- appear to be almost immutable. Yet no less immutable are the resistance and opposition to the state and those in power, and the strategies of subverting, transforming and adapting state projects of domination.

The most recent critical turn in Turkey's history is the coup attempt of 15 July 2016, promoted as the birth moment of a 'new Turkey', though its causes remain opaque and its symbolism markedly contested. It is at this new critical juncture that we will seek to take stock of novel work in the field of Turkish studies, as this is also a point where the second meaning of critique comes in: Deprived of the official ontology of the Kemalist nation-state and secular nationalism, Turkish studies as a field of research is experiencing a critical turn that unsettles its ontological foundations but may open the way for an inclusively radical reframing of the field. The inclusion of gender-sensitive perspectives and LGBT studies, the growing body of literature on Kurdish studies, the engagement with genocide studies and Armenian history, as well as the increasing move beyond the nation-state and the focus on connections, networks and mobilities is creating a more varied and potentially enriching field of study.

Inspired by these multi-directional trajectories and by the potentiality of Turkish studies as a liberating space of scholarly interaction, we will discuss the current state of the field and its possible futures. The speakers are leading scholars and young academics working on Turkey, who have collaborated with Kerem Öktem and contributed to the development of Turkish Studies at Graz. With four thematic conversations and a reflection panel, the Symposium will pay homage to Kerem Öktem and his colleagues' work at the Centre for Southeast European Studies between 2014 and 2019.

Programme

November 27, 2019

- 11:00 **WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION**
Florian Bieber, University of Graz and
Kerem Öktem, University of Oxford
- 11:15 Özlem Berk Albachten, Bosphorus University
KEYNOTE
LOST IN TRANSLATION
- 11:45 Ipek K. Yosmaoğlu, Northwestern University
**STATE POWER –
RUPTURES AND CONTINUITIES IN
STATE AND POLITICS**
- Discussants:
Murat Somer, Koç University, Istanbul
Paul Levin, Stockholm University Institute of
Turkish Studies
Cengiz Günay, Austrian Institute for Interna-
tional Affairs, Vienna
Erol Sağlam, Stockholm University Institute of
Turkish Studies
- 13:00 Karabekir Akkoyunlu, University of São Paolo
(per Skype)
**IR AND GLOBAL CONTEXT –
TURKEY'S PLACE IN THE WORLD**
- Discussants:
Reem Abou-el-Fadl, School of Oriental and
African Studies, London
Mustafa Kutlay, City University, London
Sabina Pačariž, Queen Mary University, London
László Szerencsés, University of Graz
- 14:00 Lunch (Deli Resowi)
- 15:00 Jenny White, Stockholm University, Institute of
Turkish Studies
**RELIGIOUS TURNS –
ISLAM AND BEYOND**
- Discussants:
Catharina Raudvere, University of Copenhagen
Anna Zadrozna, University of Oslo
Basileos Groen, University of Graz
Jeton Mehmeti, University of Graz
- 16:15 Chiara Maritato, University of Turin
**TRANSNATIONALISM AND DIASPORAS –
TURKS AND OTHERS BEYOND TURKEY**
- Discussants:
Bilge Yabancı, Ca' Foscari University of Venice
Gül Üret, University of Graz
Tarik Kemper, University of Graz / Berlin
- 17:30 Cenk Özbay Sabanci University
FINAL REFLECTIONS
**SOCIAL MOVEMENTS, OPPOSITIONS
AND QUEER TURNS**
- Discussants:
Ebru Soytemel, Aston University, Birmingham
Kerem Öktem, University of Oxford
- 18:00 Words of farewell
Florian Bieber, University of Graz and
Kerem Öktem, University of Oxford
- 18:00 Reception



**Centre for Southeast European Studies
Zentrum für Südosteuropastudien**

Eine Veranstaltung des Zentrums
für Südosteuropastudien der
Universität Graz.

Weitere Infos unter:
www.suedosteuropa.uni-graz.at