

Dear reader,

The academic year 2020-21 has been a difficult year for academia, including the Centre for Southeastern European Studies. With only one month of in person events and teaching, we missed informal and fruitful exchanges. At the same time, online teaching and events have allowed us of the past year to reach out to colleagues who might have not been able to join our classes and events in person in Graz.

Our centre has been joined by Prof. Dr. Bilgin Ayata on 1st September 2020 as Professor for Southeast Europe. She obtained her PhD in Political Science at Johns Hopkins University (Baltimore, USA) and has been previously teaching at Freie Universität Berlin and the University of Basel. Her research interests focus on migration, protest movements, religion, affect and emotions, intersectional and postcolonial studies, memory and transnationalism. Her regional focus is on Europe and modern Turkey. With a team of several researchers, including Derya Öztürk, Johanna Sophie Mainz, Artemis Fyssa, and Gülay Türkmen and reinforcing our research and teaching.

In addition, a new FWF 26§ Project „[‘To the Northwest! Intra-Yugoslav Albanian migration \(1953-1989\)’](#) with Rory Archer and Mladen Zobec was kicked off. Lura Pollozhani joined the center as a research on the H2020 project CONNEKT (Contexts of Violent Extremism in MENA and Balkan Societies).

We continue to host online Brown Bag Seminars and other online events, most of which are available on our YouTube channel <https://www.youtube.com/c/CentreforSoutheastEuropeanStudies>

Chiara Milan, one of our Marie Skłodowska Curie Fellows, concluded her fellowship with the online conference [“Reclaiming the Cities: Space and Contentious Politics in the Western Balkans”](#) (ReCitYu). Meanwhile, Dorian Jano joined us in the academic year 2020-21 as the latest MSC Fellow and we are looking forward to having four new *Marie Skłodowska-Curie Fellows joining the* Field of Excellence and Centre for Southeast European Studies, who won the prestigious fellowship in February 2021.

During the winter, we organized a Winter School as part of the [Interdisciplinary Joint Master's Programme in South-Eastern European Studies](#) for students to discuss the topics and proposals of upcoming master theses and a Regular Winter Semester Retreat of our Doctoral Colloquium SOE from February 2 – February 4, 2021.

In brief, it has been an active year and we are looking forward to welcoming news students to the Master and PhD programs in the Fall in person, while continuing some events online.

Best regards,

Florian Bieber