



Gunnar Hering Lectures

Gunnar Hering (Dresden, 2 April 1934 – Vienna, 22 December 1994) was a prominent historian of South East Europe. Having held various academic positions in Mainz, Freiburg im Breisgau and Göttingen, Hering eventually became the first professor of Modern Greek Studies at the University of Vienna in 1983. Known as a specialist in Greek and Bulgarian cultural history and church history as well as in the history of political parties in South East Europe, with excellent skills in a number of East and South East European languages and cultures, Hering decisively opened his field of study to interdisciplinary and trans-national approaches. He developed several research projects dedicated to the travel literature and conceptual history of modern South East Europe. With this lecture series, we honour his memory and aim to promote a lively academic dialogue on Greek and South East European history.

In cooperation with:

ÖGNS/Austrian Society of Modern Greek Studies
Department of Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies
Faculty of Historical and Cultural Studies of the University of Vienna

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7th Gunnar Hering Lecture

A Hundred Shades of Blue: Bulgarian Ideas about Greece and the Greeks

Tuesday, 25 April 2023, 18:00
Auditorium of the Archive of the University of Vienna
Ground floor, Postgasse 9, 1010 Vienna



Sirak Skitnik (1883-1943), Athens 1934-5. Copyright: Sofia City Art Gallery

7th Gunnar Hering Lecture

A Hundred Shades of Blue: Bulgarian Ideas about Greece and the Greeks

The lecture discusses the subject of mutual perceptions of neighbouring nations. Following the lead of Gunnar Hering's research on Bulgarians in the works of Greek intellectuals in the first half of the 19th century, Yura Konstantinova now reverses the point of view to focus on the Bulgarian perceptions of Greece from the second half of the 19th century until the Second World War. She presents the views of Bulgarian scientists, artists and diplomats, which differ significantly from the propaganda messages imposed on the society because of political reasons. However, the Bulgarian perceptions of Greece and the Greeks can not be fully elucidated without their relation to the Greek perceptions of Bulgaria and the Bulgarians, which are a necessary background for the presentation. The lecture raises the question about the role of intellectuals in the mutual perception and better understanding between the nations that are often considered as age-old enemies.

This year's speaker:

Yura KONSTANTINOVA

studied History and Greek Philology at the Sofia University „St. Kl. Ohridski“ and is currently a lead researcher and professor at the Institute of Balkan Studies and Center of Thracology of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences. Her Ph.D. focussed on Greek diplomacy in the Balkans in the late 19th century (published 2008) and her habilitation thesis on the Greek-Bulgarian national confrontation in Ottoman Macedonia and during the Balkan Wars (published 2014). Her widely published research covers topics in Modern Greek History, Intellectual History of the Balkans from the 19th to the 21st century, Diasporas and Migration. Recent book publications include: *The (In)visible Community: Bulgarians in Ottoman Salonica*, Istanbul 2021; *Bulgaria and Greece in a Labyrinth of Monologues*, Sofia 2022 (in Bulgarian).

Programme

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Welcome address

Elisabeth Röhrlich

Vice-dean of the Faculty of Historical and Cultural Studies

Introduction

Maria A. Stassinopoulou

Department of Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies

Austrian Society of Modern Greek Studies

A Hundred Shades of Blue: Bulgarian Ideas about Greece and the Greeks

Yura KONSTANTINOVA / Bulgarian Academy of Sciences

Respondent:

Nenad STEFANOV

studied Eastern European History, Philosophy and Slavonic Studies at the Goethe University Frankfurt a.M. and is currently a Visiting Professor at the University of Vienna. His Ph. D. on *The Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts 1944-1989* was published in 2011 and his habilitation thesis on *The Invention of Borders in the Balkans* in 2017. He publishes on memory, ideology, and nationalism in 19th and 20th century Southeastern Europe. Recent book publications include (together with Srdjan Radović eds.) *Boundaries and Borders in the Post-Yugoslav Space: A European Experience*, Berlin e.a 2021.