



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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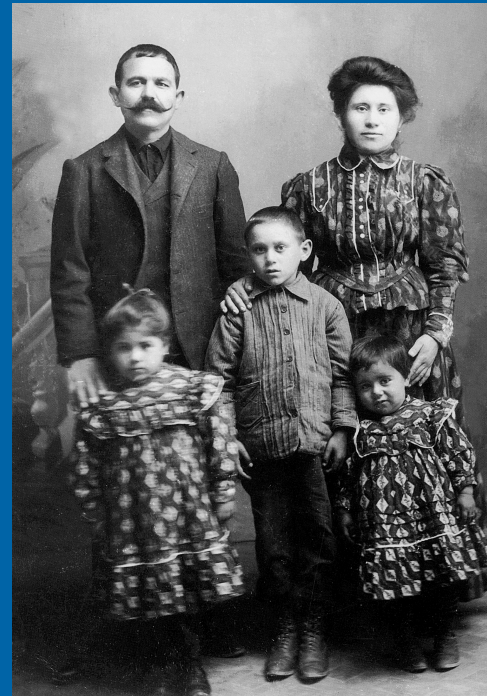
Institut für Byzantinistik
und Neogräzistik



9th Gunnar Hering Lecture Abortion in 20th century Greece

Tuesday, 8 April 2025, 18:00

Auditorium of the Archive of the University of Vienna Ground
floor, Postgasse 9, 1010 Vienna



Guest Speaker:

Prof. Violetta Hionidou

Newcastle University, UK, Professor of Modern
European History

Respondent:

Prof. Paulina Sliwa

Universität Wien, Professor of Moral and
Political Philosophy

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University of Crete Press, 1998, vol.1, p.81.

9th Gunnar Hering Lecture

Abortion in 20th century Greece

Abstract:

Couples in Greece started controlling the number of children they had (in a parity specific way) in the early 1930s. By the early 1960s, most Greek couples had a very small number of children. While pre-WWII couples were clear that they did not – and could not – fully control their fertility and neither did they have a ‘desired’ number of children, those in the 1950s were much more determined to fully control their fertility. Since no major changes in contraceptive availability or efficiency had taken place since the 1930s, the answer has to be found in the wider availability, acceptability and use of surgical abortion. This presentation will explore when, how and why abortion became such an important method of birth control in Greece. It will explore the intersections of popular culture, law, religion and medicine in bringing a wide acceptance and practice of abortion as a birth control method in Greece.

Biography:

Violetta Hionidou is a professor of Modern European history at the University of Newcastle (UK), after having taught at the University of Southampton, the University of Crete and the Ionian University (Corfu). Her research focuses on famines; birth control, abortion and fertility in historical populations; popular and modern medicine; family history and women’s work; questions of refugee experiences. She is among other associations a Fellow of the Royal Historical Society, the British Society of Population Studies and the European Society of Historical Demography and was a Visiting fellow at the Seeger Center for Hellenic Studies in 2019. She has led numerous research projects with EU and UK funding. She has published widely in journals and collected volumes, while her monographs *Famine and Death in Occupied Greece 1941-1944*. CUP 2006, and *Abortion and Contraception in Modern Greece 1830-1967*. Palgrave Macmillan 2020, have won international acclaim and were translated into Greek in 2011 and 2020 respectively.

Programm

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Auditorium of the Archive of the University of Vienna,
Ground floor, Postgasse 9, 1010 Wien

Welcome address

Nina Knieling

Head of the Archive of the University of Vienna,

Gerald Moers

Vice-dean of the Faculty of Historical and Cultural Studies

Christophe Erismann

Head of the Department of Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies

Introduction

Maria A. Stassinopoulou

Department of Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies

Austrian Society of Modern Greek Studies

Abortion in 20th century Greece

Violetta Hionidou / Newcastle University, UK

Respondent:

Paulina Anna Sliwa is a professor of Moral and Political Philosophy at the University of Vienna. Until 2021 she taught at the University of Cambridge. Her research focuses on issues of moral psychology and epistemology as well as feminist philosophy. She has published widely, held international keynote addresses and received prestigious awards and fellowships including the Elizabeth Anscombe Prize (2007) and a Leverhulme Fellowship (2019-21). She is an editor of the *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* journal and a member of the FWF Excellence Cluster Knowledge in Crisis and a Co-PI of the Doc PACE project. Recent publications include “Blaming the Victim” (*Philosophical Issues* 34, 2024) and “Changing Minds and Hearts” (*Oxford Studies in Metaethics* 20, 2023).