

Acknowledgements

This life is a whirlwind, full of paradoxes and ups and downs. Life is the subject of every book written since humankind invented writing. Nevertheless, one is bound by conventions when writing an academic book. A monograph must follow a chronological order; it must be neutral and not dogmatic, critical yet not didactic, descriptive but still not predictable. There is a little window of opportunity to be playful and this is the page of acknowledgements.

George Seferis, the first Greek poet awarded with a Nobel Prize for Literature in 1963 came up with a quote that might sound self-evident but is genuinely true at its core: “our words are the children of many people”. Indeed, we all owe our knowledge, our patterns, and our endeavors to numerous people, our significant others.

Four years of a quest to locate, read and translate all kinds of different sources revolving around the Greek Gastarbeiter resulted in my doctoral thesis, defended at the European University Institute in Florence in January 2022. Aside from the academic part, I also owe gratitude to the European University Institute for its financial support in the form of a subsidy towards the copyediting of this book.

In this journey, my supervisor professor Laura Downs taught me that in academia “il faut ramer, ramer”. However, despite the effort that this incessant rowing requires, you should still be able to enjoy the surrounding landscape and cherish the people that undertake the same feat as you. Apart from her feedback on my texts, she always offers me a confidence boost calling me a “shy net-worker” for my ability to connect people and inspire teamwork.

The members of my jury, namely Professors Corinna Unger, Efi Avdela and Lauren Stokes also contributed greatly with their insights into the process of turning my thesis into a book. Due to their expertise in German and Greek postwar history, their thorough comments showed me the divergent paths that my research project could take. Beyond their advice, their standing as accomplished female academics is a source for encouragement for me, equally so as my Master supervisor Professor Pothiti Hantzaroula and the legendary Professor Emerita Luisa Passerini, who honors me with her friendship.

The same applies to the editors of this series *Migrations in History*, since it was Professor Mahteld Venken who was originally interested in my research and welcomed me into the world of academic publications. The editor Ms. Rabea Rittgerodt and Ms. Verena Deutsch accommodated my book in De Gruyter’s series so swiftly and offered me a very professional introduction to the otherwise unknown to me logistics of publishing.

I would also like to thank my host institute during the time I was preparing this book, namely ELTE University and CEU Democracy Institute in Budapest, for

their hospitality. Special thanks to Professors Gábor Czoch and Péter Erdősi for guiding my first steps in teaching, and Marton Belik, Tamara Kamatovic and Matyas Szabo for their support as coordinators of the Global Teaching Fellowship Program. Finally, it would be an unforgivable omission not to thank all the librarians and archivists who offered me access to the collections they safeguard and were always at my disposal for my various requests.

Apart from my mentors among mid- and late-career scholars, my lucky star brought me brilliant peers. We all share similar skills and academic curiosity, together with a shared anxiety for our future as early career researchers. In this transition from Florence to Budapest and then to the unknown, a group of friends was formed: Turkay Gasimova, Adrian Matus, Nico Weber and Pardis Moradi made Budapest a special place to write a book.

My dear academic friends, met during past exchanges, also shared my enthusiasm for this book: my Greek squad made up by fellow doctors Sofia Tatidou, Evgenia Ralli, Kalliopi Geronymaki, Natalia Tellidou and the doctors-to-be Fotis Papadopoulos, Nikoleta Tsigkra and Eleutheria Alexandri. Equally, my dearest foreign squad consisting of Jelena Čelebić, Henriikka Hannula, Alexandra Gerea, Juna Toska, Lucija Grgić, Erse Kahraman, Marta Cenedese, Karlo Kraj, Aris Douglas, Lizbeth Matzer and many others. My Greek friends back home, Christina, Marina and Kelly, Nikol, Alexandra, Despoina, Evangelia and many others, despite being away from academia, always believed in me. They tolerated all my obscure talks about the Greek Gastarbeiter, showing admirable patience until this book was finished. An endless source of inspiration and support has also always been my dearest teacher and friend, mr. Achilleas Kitsoleris. As Freddie Mercury puts it “it's not easy, love, but you've got friends you can trust”. Thank you, all!

My dearest friend Ana Maria Spariosu always jokes with me that I made writing a book look like a piece of cake. Her constant sweetness in the last few years might be to blame for the cake metaphor, but I deeply thank her for her faith in me, her support and admiration. And for editing this book with much care! However, it is not a historian but a legal scholar who complimented me on this book and which touched me the most: “A book is the Mount Everest of Academia!”. Without Nastazja Potocka-Sioneck and her inspirational talks, every single day would be tasteless. She tirelessly urges me to “jump from high places,” and she made me discover my hidden gift for turbo-writing. Too good is too good!

This book is dedicated to the loving memory of my late grandfather, Christos Tsakiris, and its publication coincides with a decade since his journey to eternity. This book is among other things a tribute to my grandpa's generation (born in the 1930s) and the pressures they faced as “children of the war” and heirs of political instability and deeply rooted social inequalities. Being a storyteller's granddaughter, finally (*ev τέλει*) I had no choice than becoming a historian.

This book is also dedicated to my family. Apart from bringing me to life (which is a debatable benefit for humanity!), my family always had my back. They armed me with the confidence to be myself, the freedom to make my own choices, the pride, the support, and the care that someone needs to keep going. Thank you, mum, dad, and Vicky: you are my cup of gold!

