

**“VWI invites the Austrian Center for Intelligence, Propaganda and Security Studies (ACIPSS)”**

Wednesday, 16 January 2019, 3.00 pm  
1010 Vienna, Rabensteig 3, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor

**Benedetta CARNAGHI**

**SPIES IN THE CONCENTRATION UNIVERSE**

**HOW NAZI “V-MÄNNER” CONTRIBUTED TO DEPORTATION IN THE SECOND WORLD WAR**

The Gestapo used so-called *Vertrauensmänner* or *V-Männer* [confidence men] to spy on the political opponents of Nazism. Who were these spies and how were they recruited? What was their contribution to the persecution of the Jews throughout Europe?

In Vienna, the Gestapo seemed to give top priority to the surveillance and dismantling of resistance groups, using *V-Männer* who had previous connections or were already integrated within such groups. The Gestapo in Berlin issued general guidelines for the subordinate office in Vienna, but Gestapo officials in Vienna took decisions at their own discretion. What does that tell us about the *Anschluss* and the Austrians’ uneasy loyalty to Berlin? In Vienna, a small number of Jews also served as spies and informers. The most famous of these Jewish spies was Rudolf Klinger, who was responsible for betraying and dismantling the resistance group led by Ella and Kurt Lingens and Karl Motesiczky.



What can we learn by comparing Austria to Vichy and occupied France? The Nazis also used *Vertrauensmänner* in France, where many of them were identified and tried as “traitors” after the war. But to which “State” did the spies have to be loyal? Some defended themselves against the accusation of treason by arguing that they had simply obeyed Vichy France’s spirit of “collaboration.”

What role did Austrian and French spies play in the concentration universe and how did they lead the Nazis to arrest and deport their targets to concentration camps? Drawing on archival sources collected from the French National Archives in Pierrefitte-sur-Seine, the Defense Historical Service in Vincennes, the archives of *La Contemporaine* in Nanterre, and the *Dokumentationsarchiv des österreichischen Widerstandes* (DÖW) in Vienna, my presentation will reveal the importance of spies to the Gestapo’s proactive approach to the Nazi persecution—an issue that has long been debated in the existing historiography.

**Commented by Siegfried BEER**

*Benedetta Carnaghi* is a Junior Fellow at the VWI and a Ph.D. candidate in History at Cornell University. She is currently completing a dissertation on the activity of spies in the Fascist secret police, called OVRA, and its Nazi counterpart, the Gestapo, from 1927 (the genesis of the OVRA) to 1945. Her last article *Three Layers of Ambiguity: Homosexual Spies and International Intrigue in Fascist Italy* was published in the 2017 special issue of *The Space Between: Literature and Culture 1914–1945*.

*Siegfried Beer* taught late modern and contemporary history at the University of Graz from 1978 to 2013. His main research areas are international politics and Anglo-American cultures since 1776, Austria in the 20th century, and the role of intelligence since 1914. Until 2018 he directed the Austrian Center for Intelligence, Propaganda and Security Studies and published the *Journal for Intelligence, Propaganda and Security Studies*.

Please register at [anmeldung@vwi.ac.at](mailto:anmeldung@vwi.ac.at) by latest Tuesday, 15 January, 12.00 am and bring your ID.