

**“VWI invites the Department of Economic and Social History  
at the University of Vienna”**

**Wednesday, 22 February 2017, 5.00 pm  
1010 Vienna, Rabensteig 3, Research Lounge, 3rd floor**



**Mark LEWIS**

**Private Lives and Public Actions. Viennese Policemen During the Holocaust Era**

Although Austria's political system changed four times from World War I to the post-World War II period, the Vienna police survived as an institution. It maintained certain mindsets and investigative practices but modified others during the transformations from imperial monarchy to republicanism, Austro-fascism, Nazism, and back to republicanism again. Some of the police's history is controversial, including their cooperation with military intelligence during World War I to create a new surveillance apparatus, their repression of worker demonstrations in 1927, the involvement of some members in the putsch against Dollfuß in 1934, the police's role in guarding deportation transports of Jews in 1942, and policemen who served as security police in Nazi-occupied Europe. On the other hand, there are cases of police who helped the Austrian resistance, assisted partisans abroad, and helped Jews avoid being deported to concentration camps. This presentation will discuss the preliminary results of an investigation of 83 Viennese policemen who served in the *Kripo*, *Gestapo*, or *Grenzpolizei*, illuminating their life stories. It will also present an analytical framework explaining how different types of policemen adapted to changes in the regime, and what motivated some to commit crimes, while others did not.

**Commented by Sigrid WADAUER**

*Mark Lewis* is Research Fellow at the VWI. He obtained his PhD in history from the University of California, Los Angeles. He is an Associate Professor of European History at the City University of New York, College of Staten Island. He is also the author of *The Birth of the New Justice: The Internationalization of Crime and Punishment, 1919–1950*, Oxford 2014.

*Sigrid Wadauer* is currently Professor at the Department of Economic and Social History at the University of Vienna. She published among others *Die Tour der Gesellen. Mobilität und Biographie im Handwerk vom 18. bis zum 20. Jahrhundert*, Frankfurt am Main (et. al.) 2005; *The Usual Suspects. Begging and Law Enforcement in Interwar Austria*, at: Beate Althammer, Andreas Gestrich, Jens Gründler (ed.), *The Welfare State and the 'Deviant Poor' in Europe, 1870–1933*, Basingstoke 2014, 126-149; *Der Arbeit nachgehen? Auseinandersetzungen um Lebensunterhalt und Mobilität (Österreich 1880–1938)* (forthcoming).