



Creating and defining a police administration for the capital city: conceptual, spatial and political problems of the institutionalisation. Munich, second half of the 18th century (1745-1808)

The present dissertation analyses the institutionalisation of the police, which is a phenomenon already known to the historiography: during the second half of the 18th century, many European cities set up new police administrations that centralised and unified police powers. Even though historical research has already shed light on this evolution, the main interpretative scheme applied to it, that is the construction of the modern state, has been widely put into question over the past decades. Therefore, the institutionalisation of the police needs a new interpretation; therein lies the objective of the present work. The aim is to bring together the primarily conceptual perspective of the German historiography, which focusses on the large conception of social order called *Policey*, and the predominantly institutional and functional understanding of the police in the French historiography.

To this end, the thesis conceives the institutionalisation as an act of definition and attempts to grasp its protagonists, scales and stakes. It shows that the evolution of the police was carried by a handful of administrators who asserted and repeated their ideas over several decades. The institutionalisation changed the meaning of the police and was not a mere attempt at rationalisation: it was also a political question involving power relationships between actors and different views on the relations between the governors and the governed. The thesis brings to light the struggles surrounding a concept of *Polizei* that cannot be equated either with the *Policey* or with police practices; rather, it concerns the existence of police authority.