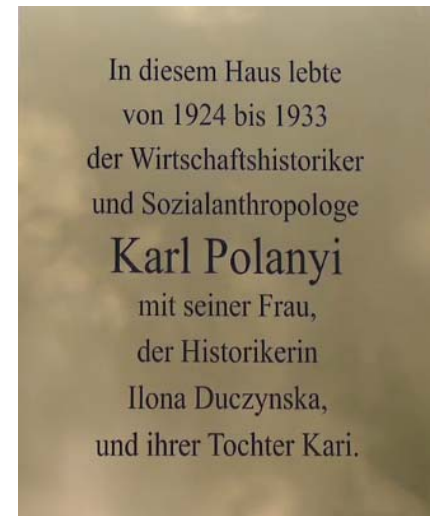


## THE RETURN OF KARL POLANYI TO VIENNA

On the afternoon of August 20, 2015, a small crowd of friends, colleagues, and residents gathered in front of the entrance to Vorgarten-203 in Vienna to witness the unveiling of a plaque noting the former residence of Karl Polanyi and Ilona Duczynska. The long overdue return of Karl and Ilona Polanyi to Vienna was initiated by Christoph Deutschman, German sociologist and frequent visitor to Vienna. In his comment at the unveiling, he mentioned that on many visits to Vienna he noted that many such plaques were dedicated to the memory of musicians, writers, actors and other cultural figures, but none to the eminent economic historian, Karl Polanyi. With support of the German and Austrian Sociological Association, and the invaluable assistance of Professor Jörg Flecker, head of the Department of Sociology at the University of Vienna, all bureaucratic and other obstacles were overcome. The plaque reads: *"In this house lived from 1924 to 1933 the economic historian and social anthropologist Karl Polanyi with his wife, historian, Ilona Duczynska, and their daughter Kari."*



Kari Polanyi opened her remarks by declaring that she was a child of Red Vienna. Although she had no siblings, she was never lonely. She recalled every day of the week in February 1934 when the government attacked and defeated the workers of Vienna. Shortly after this, she was sent to England while her mother remained in Vienna for another two years to assist the Schutzbund in resistance to the Austrian brand of Fascism.

Before unveiling the plaque, Kari closed her remarks by noting her good fortune of having parents, each very different and independent-minded but sharing a socialist philosophy of life. She recalled the fitting tribute paid to them by György Dalos as The Fidelity of Equals.

After introductory remarks by Profs. Flecker and Deutschmann, tributes were paid to the enduring importance of the work of Karl Polanyi by the following members of the academic community: Theresa Fibich (University of Vienna); Alan Scott (University of Innsbruck); Sandor Striker (University, Budapest); Andreas Novy (Vienna University of Economics and Business); Tatjana Thelen (University of Vienna); and Sigrid Stagl (Vienna University of Economics and



Business). Ilona Duczynska was briefly remembered by her biographer, Veronika Helfert (University of Vienna). Elisabeth (Liesl) März recalled that her father, economic historian Eduard März, grew up in this house before immigrating in 1938. Finally, Georg Wiesinger, rural sociologist addressed the audience as a current tenant of VorgartenStresse 203. At its conclusion of the speeches, Wingrit and Anton Tolpeit graciously opened their home to all and any and provided light refreshments.

The event was reported in Vienna's popular cultural weekly, *Verfalter*, with a large picture of the unveiling of the plaque. Following the ceremony, participants were invited to share a meal at a neighbourhood restaurant overlooking the river Danube.

**A 50-minute video of the event, produced by Peter Janacek is available at <https://vimeo.com/138376317> (password: polanyi).**