

# WIENER LIBRARY NEWS

NOVEMBER 2005

NUMBER 49

## CENTRALVEREIN RECORDS

**When Alfred Wiener returned to Germany having done his patriotic duty in the First World War, it shocked and horrified him to be confronted with an upsurge of anti-Jewish hate propaganda and accusations against the Jewish community that Germany's defeat was due to a stab in the back.**

Wiener's response was characteristic: he engaged actively with the problem as a speaker and writer, and joined Germany's largest representative body, the *Centralverein deutscher Staatsbürger jüdischen Glaubens*. Founded in 1893, the CV, as it was known, had a membership of around 60,000 by 1926. Its mission was to represent German citizens who were Jews, to promote and defend their civil rights and liberties and to combat antisemitism.

Wiener rapidly reached a very senior position, being the *Syndikus* of the national organisation. He was also heavily involved with the *CV Zeitung*, for which he wrote regularly.

Wiener was instrumental in the creation in 1928 of the CV's *Büro Wilhelmstrasse*, a special archive about the Nazis and their activities. He left the organisation in 1933, when he fled Germany for Amsterdam in the wake of Hitler's accession to power. There he founded the organisation which, after the war, he renamed the Wiener Library.

As the Nazi regime increasingly revealed its persecutory and murderous intent, the CV focused more on promoting emigration and the vocational training needed to make this possible. In 1935 it was forced to change its name to *Centralverein der Juden in Deutschland*, which negated the implication of full civil equality which its original name proclaimed. Following the November Pogrom of 1938 a further name change was the prelude to the organisation's demise in 1939. Its papers were seized by the Gestapo and until the 1990s it was presumed that they had been destroyed.

It was then revealed that they had been preserved in the Russian State Military Archive, having been captured by the Red Army at the end of the war.

We recall this story now because – after much patient research and discussion – the Wiener Library has succeeded in securing the necessary permissions to acquire a microfilm copy of the CV archive for its collection. The 155 reels of film were prepared by the Central Archives for the History of

the Jewish People in Jerusalem, to whose Director, Hadassah Assouline, we are very grateful.

This archive is a major resource for historians and students of the period, and the Library is proud that it is the only archive in western Europe to have secured a copy. A description of the archive has been published by Avraham Barkai in the *Yearbook of the Leo Baeck Institute* (Vol. XLV, 2000, pp173-82). The collection will be open to users once a basic finding aid is available.



*Alfred Wiener as a young boy with his father outside the family shop in Bentschen, in the late years of the 19th century when the Centralverein was founded. Wiener was to become one of its leading figures in the 1920s.*

WIENER  
LIBRARY WORK  
EXPERIENCE

TAMARA  
SCHMIDT

In July 2005 Tamara Schmidt undertook a short work experience placement at the Library. For Tamara – who is the granddaughter of Ernst Fraenkel, formerly the Library's Chairman and now Joint-President, and the daughter of Ellen Schmidt, a member of the Library's Executive Committee – this was never going to be an ordinary week. So we asked her to give us her impressions. She writes:

"The Wiener Library has always been part of my life. Consequently I thought work experience at the Library would be the perfect way to pass a week of my summer holiday, as I already had a basic idea of the work the Library does and the way it works. Or so I thought...

"During my week at the Library I had a brief introduction to what everyone does; from archiving and acquisitions, to cataloguing and indexing books, I had an opportunity to try my hand at

*(continued on page 3)*

WIENER LIBRARY NEWS

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KATHERINE KLINGER

PUBLISHED BY THE INSTITUTE OF  
CONTEMPORARY HISTORY AND THE WIENER  
LIBRARY LTD (LONDON). REGISTERED WITH  
THE CHARITY COMMISSIONERS NO 313015  
ISSN 123 456 7890 X  
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# YOUR LIBRARY NEEDS YOU!!

**S**ince its beginning in 1933, the Wiener Library has been actively collecting press cuttings from a wide variety of newspapers and journals. The earliest cuttings, from 1933 to 1955, are already on microfilm. The second part of the press archive, ca. 300,000 cuttings, covers the years 1955 to 2004, and these will now be microfilmed for two reasons: preservation and space.

Newspaper is of notoriously bad quality and becomes unusable with age. Constant use of cuttings, handling, unfolding and refolding, exacerbates this problem; the older cuttings from the 1950s and 1960s are already quite brittle. Microfilming will preserve the archive in perpetuity. The cuttings currently take up 14 filing cabinets plus 55 metres of shelves. Once scanned, we usually dispose of the originals.

We urgently seek new volunteers to work in our press cuttings archive!

The press cuttings are filed by subject matter, and within subjects they are sorted into chronological order. Volunteers double-check that the cuttings are in date order, remove any staples and flatten cuttings that are folded. A qualified conservator is on hand to provide appropriate training.

We already have a dedicated group of NADFAS volunteers, but we need more people in order to finish in time for the move to a new building. The project will take at least two and a half years. Volunteers will work with three or four other volunteers for one day a week. Although volunteers do not have to commit for the whole length of the project, a minimum commitment of six months is anticipated. If you are interested in helping us or would like more information, please contact Kat Hübschmann, Senior Librarian (Kat@wienerlibrary.co.uk).

## TESTAMENTS ONLINE

**B**etween 1998 and 2000 the Library collaborated with Thomson Gale to produce three microform publications edited by Ben Barkow under the title *Testaments to the Holocaust*. The first comprised books, documents and photos from the Wiener Library, the second featured the Library's thematic press archives and the third the Henriques Archive of the work of the Jewish Relief Units in the British zone of occupation 1945-1950.

As part of our ongoing commitment to offering the widest possible public access to our materials, the Library has collaborated again with Thomson Gale to create *Testaments to the Holocaust Online*, a fully searchable, full-text and image resource for research on the Holocaust, the Nazi era, Jewish resistance, the Second World War and its legacy. Ben Barkow has again served as editor and provided the introduction, and Dr Nikolaus Wachsmann of Birkbeck, University of London, and Professor Dan Stone, Royal Holloway, University of London, have contributed historical essays.

Designed chiefly for libraries to subscribe to, the cost of subscription is necessarily high. However, the Wiener Library is able to offer free access to this resource to all visitors to the Library. The online archive has four sections:

- Original Nazi propaganda materials
- Eyewitness accounts of the November Pogrom of 1938 and of the Holocaust
- Photographic materials
- Wiener Library publications

Benefits of using the archive include precise searching using keywords, author, description, document type and language; search-term highlighting – which identifies each instance of a search term within a document; and fuzzy search capabilities, so that words can be found in a document despite imperfect matches in spelling or writing.

A launch of *Testaments to the Holocaust Online* is planned for late November 2005.

# THIRD GENERATION PROJECT



*Across three generations – the Library's new project will help youngsters explore their heritage and connect with their roots.*

**A thoughtful benefactor, concerned that the third generation appears to have only a basic understanding of the Holocaust, has kindly donated funding to the Wiener Library to facilitate developing an educational project specifically targeting this generation. As far as we know, it is the first time in this country that a project aimed at the grandchildren of Holocaust survivors and refugees has been undertaken. To date, it has been enthusiastically supported by a large number of second generation parents – many of whom have remarked that they only wish they had been offered a similar opportunity when they were in their late teens and early twenties.**

The third generation project will initially run for two years, the first of which will be specifically aimed at schoolchildren in London and the South East. It is the Library's hope to extend the project to five years, allowing the Library's education team to reach members of the third

generation not only in the London area, but also in the Midlands and the North.

Delighted to be part of such a unique and interesting project, the recently appointed co-ordinator for the project, Monica Lowenberg, hopes that her experience as a teacher, historian and second generation member will be of benefit. In the first year, the project will run a series of linked seminars beginning in the new year. Through using some of the unique material available at the Wiener Library, up to fifteen participants will gain a clearer understanding of their families' pasts, the ongoing generational effects of exile and genocide, and an understanding of where and how to access historical and genealogical information, as well as developing a sense of community with other members of the group.

Third generation members interested in committing to six meetings from January to May 2006 should in the first instance contact Monica at the Wiener Library ([Lowenberg@wienerlibrary.co.uk](mailto:Lowenberg@wienerlibrary.co.uk)). All reasonable travel expenses will be reimbursed and lunch and refreshments provided.

## WIENER LIBRARY WORK EXPERIENCE

*(continued from page 2)*

everything. As well as this I helped out with odd jobs around the Library and tried to help the NADFAS volunteers with their pamphlet preservation; however, I think my lack of sewing ability meant I was more of a hindrance. For me, the highlight of the week was vacuuming books, because, to my delight, the Library possesses a book-sized Hoover. Reading and summarising microfilms pushed my knowledge (and eyesight) to the limit, as I'd never previously known that much about Fascism in England. Issued with strict instructions to skim read the books, I spent two days avidly reading them in order to find out more. And when I was asked to prepare the weekly exhibition I spent another day and a half ploughing through books and documents, enthralled by what I'd discovered.

"I'd always assumed, in my arrogant teenage way, that working at a Library was an interesting but relaxed job. I was wrong. I was let into the secret of the cataloguing system, and allowed to go through the document archive; I cleaned, hoovered, carried, and read books; I spent two happy afternoons ensuring that the links on the Library website worked; I created an exhibition and I explored the photo archive.

"Overall the week was incredibly interesting and rewarding, and the friendliness and welcoming attitudes of all of the staff made the experience really enjoyable. Hopefully I'll be able to return for my gap year!"

### PHOTO ARCHIVE ONLINE PILOT

From November, for the first time the Library provides, in a trial version, the opportunity to access its images directly via the web. We are starting this pilot with a selection of 400 pictures but the database is constantly growing over time. You are now able to search on our site for:

- pictures showing specific events e.g. the 'Kindertransport' rescue of Jewish children from Nazi Germany
- images illustrating specific subjects, such as 'racial doctrine' and 'propaganda'
- portraits of people connected with 20th century European history e.g. 'Hitler, Adolf or 'Hindenburg, Paul von'
- images connected with the activities of organisations e.g. the 'Jewish Relief Unit' or the 'Stern Gang'
- certain picture motifs, like 'railways', 'musical instruments' or 'synagogues'
- pictures taken in specific locations and countries, e.g. 'Third Reich' or 'Amsterdam'
- specific categories of pictorial material such as paintings, cartoons and postcards
- scans of selected documents from the Library's archives
- images from certain periods such as First World War or 1945-1949 (post-Second World War years).

The search facility allows both simple and combined searches i.e. you can combine two terms using the options 'AND', 'OR', and 'NOT'. This allows you to look for instance for all images showing Adolf Hitler but NOT with children, or all pictures depicting either 'Marches & rallies' OR 'Speeches'.

*(continued on page 5)*

## IMAGES FROM THE ARCHIVES

# THE OHEL DAVID CHILDREN'S HOME, SLOVAKIA 1945-1949

Armin Frieder was a Slovakian rabbi and an active Zionist. In 1942 he became a member of a resistance group in Bratislava, set up to save the remaining Jews in Fascist Slovakia, and served as the underground's contact with Slovak government circles. Under Frieder's influence, the Ohel David home for the aged at Nove Mesto in western Slovakia became a refuge from deportations. Following the suppression of the Slovak Uprising in the autumn of 1944, Frieder found refuge in a Catholic monastery. After the war he was Chief Rabbi of the Jewish communities of Slovakia. The Ohel David was turned into an orphanage where the children received a Zionist education and were prepared for the emigration to Palestine. This also included military training.



Left: Rabbi Armin Frieder.  
Above: Girls form a Magen David.  
Below: Boys receiving military training at the children's home.





Worship at Ohel David.



Dinner time at Ohel David.



Children posing for a group portrait in April 1948.

## WEB UPDATE

### PHOTO ARCHIVE

### ONLINE PILOT

*(continued from page 4)*

After you have submitted your search the facility shows you the selected images in low resolution and, in another step, gives you the file names. You can then send these to Marek, our Photo Archivist, to order the pictures as high resolution files.

### PERIODICALS

### PROJECT BEARS

### FRUIT

In January 2005 we started our periodicals project (please find details in *Wiener Library News* October 2004). We are now (as it is harvest time) happy to present to you the first fruits of our efforts. At the beginning of October the periodicals catalogue went live on the website. The first batch of over 1,200 titles may now be searched by title, subject, publisher and period of publication. More titles are added on a daily basis.

Parallel to cataloguing our holdings we are also conducting a preservation survey to assess the condition of each title. Based on the information gathered we will then decide which titles should be bound or replaced by microfilms, or whether we want to conserve the originals.

In August Martin Wimmer joined us for 5 months as an intern. He is in his fifth semester of a Library Studies degree at the *Hochschule der Medien in Stuttgart*. Martin has been a great help in moving the project forward.

# PARTING SHOTS

**F**or several years the Library has been pleased to welcome young volunteers from Germany and Austria. As the summer drew to its close, we said goodbye to two such volunteers, **Marta Mituta, from Wroclaw in Poland, sent by Aktion Sühnezeichen Friedensdienste and Patrick Marko, from Graz, Austria, sent by the Austrian Gedenkdienst. They have been among the most enthusiastic and hard-working volunteers we have had at the Library – in Patrick’s case, even girlfriend Chiara Ricci was regularly roped in to help out at the Library. Here the two of them report on their experiences.**



## Marta

Working in a library – boring, monotonous, plodding? No, well maybe, but not only...

After one year as a volunteer, I have got to know about the work of a library from ‘the other side’. Of course, there are monotonous tasks that have to be undertaken to provide easy access to the collection, which is also now online. But the most interesting part of the work here is meeting people – both those visiting the Library and those working or volunteering here.

There are various conversations and faces I will remember for a long time. I felt particularly happy when I met readers either personally connected to Poland, or interested in the history of the people from ‘somewhere in the wild East’.

The Wiener Library is a special place for the daily study not only of history and practical skills, but also of people, including myself. During my year as a volunteer in the Wiener Library, I noticed

a triangular connection for me between Poland, Germany and Great Britain. This started with my Polish background, continued with my knowledge of German culture, language and history, and finished with the experience of working in Great Britain. On the basis of the superb collection of the Wiener Library and its history, I have realised how many historical connections there are between these three European countries and how intensively I can learn about my country from the experience of living abroad. My mission to serve as a Polish emissary in the Wiener Library finished at the end of August 2005 and I am very pleased to have been a little part of its work and history.



## Patrick

My stay here was two months longer than Marta’s, as I was at the Library until the end of September. For me, my time in London was an alternative to service in the Austrian military, but it was much more than that: it was a great chance to

learn more about the history and fate of European Jewry, the history of Europe, the history of my home country and the history of my family.

It was also a unique opportunity to get to know many people I would have never met otherwise, and learn about their lives and fates. In addition to this, I had the chance to work in a great and important library: an internationally renowned place of Holocaust study, with many wonderful, friendly people who have become my friends.

Marta and I have both handed on our duties to our respective successors and we are sure they will continue what we have done: help the library and its visitors, get to know people and spread the word about this wonderful place.

Some of the projects we have worked on during our time include:

- Digitising an extensive collection of reports on the November Pogroms of 1938, which the Library assembled shortly after the events between 1938 and 1939. This has enabled them to become accessible to readers.
- Sorting, preserving and indexing parts of the vast Wiener Library Archive. This includes the correspondence, files, catalogues, publications and miscellaneous material the Wiener Library has produced over the last 70 years.
- Assisting Miriam Haardt, Deputy Senior Librarian, by creating summaries of books in order to facilitate indexing. We also helped improve the system of index terms for concentration camps in the new online-catalogue, so that readers can find books on their topic of interest more easily.
- Translating numerous documents from the Library’s holdings from Polish to German and English, to make them accessible to more people.
- Assisting in the painstaking correction work that eventually led to the publication of Philipp Manes’ *Tatsachenbericht*, in spring 2005.
- Assembling an index to a doctor’s diary from the Terezin ghetto the Library holds in its document collection. This means that it is now possible to provide genealogical information for researching relatives, without breaching the privacy of the medical records.



In the public gallery at the Eichmann trial, 1961.

The joint lecture series with the Leo Baeck Institute and the Centre for German-Jewish Studies, University of Sussex, is already underway with a wide-ranging series of topics addressed by leading scholars (see back page and insert). At the same time, two MA courses run by the University of Sussex and Royal Holloway are being taught for the third consecutive year at the Library, with student numbers growing each year. Royal Holloway continues to co-run with the Wiener Library three one-day seminars during the academic year – the first on comparative genocide, held in mid-October, attracted significant interest from students and tutors. Clearly there is a growing demand and interest for universities to teach courses on the Holocaust and comparative genocide – an interest reflected in the Wiener Library's own ground-breaking conference held in 2001, Generations of Genocide.

Partly in response to this, the Wiener Library is currently collaborating on a joint conference entitled Teaching and Researching the Politics of Mass Murder, 22-23 June 2006. Part-funded by the Jean Monnet Fund of the European Union, it is being jointly organised by Kingston University and the Helen Bamber Centre, the University of Siena and the Wiener Library. It aims to bring together key lecturers, researchers, writers and broadcasters, to reflect on how and why such events continue to occur in the modern world; how they can be analysed, written about and presented; and the role that universities in particular can play in developing greater public awareness and engagement with such issues across Europe. The conference is part of a broader EU project entitled Reflecting upon Crimes against Humanity and Human Rights – a European Agenda for the 21st Century. The conference will address five main issues: teaching courses on mass murder; academic research on mass murder; campaigning and mobilising non-governmental organisations; writing about mass murder; and televising/filming mass murder. Further details will be available from January 2006.

Beginning in February 2006, the Library will also be offering a course on Jewish genealogy and the Holocaust. Drawing on the expertise of members of the Jewish Genealogical Society, participants will be able to learn about ways of accessing archival material, both from the web as well as our own archives and national archive collections. The course will focus on three countries: Germany, Austria and Poland, and participants will be welcome to join the course for all or part of the sessions offered. For further information please contact Katherine Klinger on 020 7636 7247 or email [Klinger@wienerlibrary.co.uk](mailto:Klinger@wienerlibrary.co.uk).

### UK JEWISH FILM FESTIVAL 2005

The Wiener Library is delighted to have sponsored the film 'Watermarks' at this year's Jewish Film Festival. This critically acclaimed film is the story of the champion women swimmers of the legendary Jewish sports club, Hakoah ('strength' in Hebrew), Vienna.

Founded in 1909 when Jews were barred from other sports clubs, Hakoah's best-known triumphs came from its women swimmers, who dominated national competitions in Austria. They were stripped of their medals when they refused to represent Austria in the 1936 Berlin Olympics. Israeli film director, Yaron Zilberman, meets members of the women's team sixty-five years later in their homes around the world, and arranges for them to have a reunion at their old swimming pool in Vienna. The film depicts seven outstanding female athletes who still swim daily as they age with grace. One of the champion swimmers, Ann Marie Pisker, attended the screening and answered questions before an audience clearly moved by the content of the film. It is hoped that a video of the film will be made available in the near future.



# FORTHCOMING EVENTS

## LECTURE SERIES 2005-2006 WIENER LIBRARY

**8 NOVEMBER 2005**

**PROFESSOR MICHAEL A. MEYER**  
JEWISH SPIRITUAL RESISTANCE IN  
NAZI GERMANY: A TALE OF TWO  
RABBIS

**8 DECEMBER 2005**

**DR GERD KOENEN**  
TERRORISM AND ANTISEMITISM IN  
POSTWAR GERMANY

**26 JANUARY 2006**

**DR SYBILLE STEINBACHER**  
AUSCHWITZ: MODEL OF  
GERMANISATION AND ANNIHILATION

**15 FEBRUARY 2006**

**PROFESSOR DENNIS KLEIN**  
THE RETURN OF REPPRESSED MEMORY:  
FREUD AND OTHER JEWS AT THE  
GENESIS OF PSYCHOANALYSIS

**15 MARCH 2006**

**PROFESSOR JEAN-FRANÇOIS  
BERGIER**  
SWITZERLAND AND THE SECOND  
WORLD WAR. EXPERIENCES OF AN  
HISTORIAN

**6 APRIL 2006**

**BEN BARKOW, DR KLAUS LEIST**  
TEREZIN: ENDURANCE AND  
OVERCOMING: THE WRITINGS OF  
PHILIPP MANES

**24 MAY 2006**

**PROFESSOR SAUL DUBOW**  
APARTHEID, RACE AND  
ANTISEMITISM: EUROPEAN  
ANTECEDENTS, LOCAL  
ADAPTATIONS

**19 JUNE 2006**

**PROFESSOR SUSAN  
NEIMAN**  
NATURAL AND UNNATURAL  
EVILS

All lectures will be held at the Wiener Library and begin at 7pm. Admission is free.

Places must be reserved in advance by telephoning / emailing the Leo Baeck

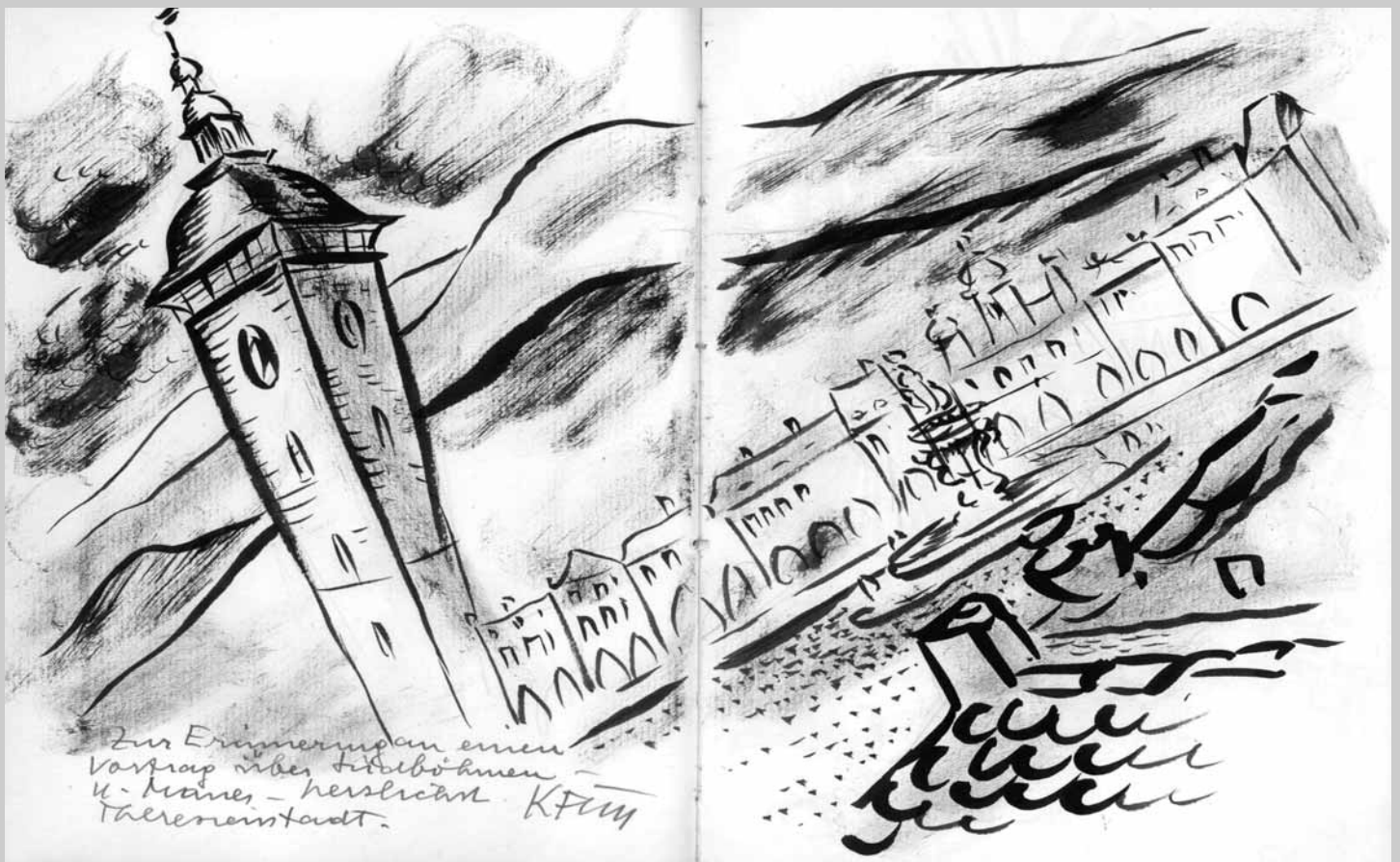
Institute on 020 7580 3493 / [info@leobaeck.co.uk](mailto:info@leobaeck.co.uk)

Latecomers may not be admitted

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[www.leobaeck.co.uk](http://www.leobaeck.co.uk)

[www.sussex.ac.uk/Units/cgjs](http://www.sussex.ac.uk/Units/cgjs)



Drawing of Terezin from the Philipp Manes manuscript.