

HEINZ PRAEGER PAPERS, circa 1918-2018 (bulk 1939-1947)
1997.A.0187.2

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Archives
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Descriptive summary

Title: Heinz Praeger papers

Dates: circa 1918-2018, bulk 1939-1947

Catalog number: 1997.A.0187.2

Additional accession numbers: 1997.A.0187.1, 2015.488.1, 2018.202.1

Creator: Praeger, Heinz, 1911-1997

Extent: 8 folders, 1 box, 2 oversize folders

Repository: United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Archives, 100 Raoul Wallenberg Place SW, Washington, DC 20024-2126

Abstract: The Heinz Praeger papers include biographical materials, photographs, and printed materials documenting Heinz Praeger, his prewar life in Germany, and his wartime years as a refugee with his wife and son in Shanghai.

Languages: English, Japanese, German

Administrative Information

Access: There are no known restrictions on access to this material.

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Preferred citation: (Identification of item), Heinz Praeger papers (1997.A.0187.2), United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Archives, Washington, DC

Acquisition information: Michael (Mick) Carlon donated the Heinz Praeger papers to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in 1997, 2015, and 2018. Mick Carlon was a friend of Heinz Praeger.

Related material: The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum library holds a copy of a Passover Haggadah (BM674.6 .A3 1945) inscribed to Heinz and Felicitas Praeger from the Jewish community of Hawaii, which Mick Carlon also donated.

Accruals: Accruals may have been received since this collection was first processed. See archives catalog at collections.ushmm.org for further information.

Processing history: Julie Schweitzer, February 2023.

Biographical note

Karl Heinz Praeger (1911-1997) was born on July 7, 1911 in Berlin, Germany to Siegfried (1880-1943) and Rosa Praeger (1877-1939). He had an older brother, Armin (b. 1908). He was educated as an accountant and worked at a large bank in Berlin. After the Nazis took power in Germany, Armin Praeger, who was a Communist, left for Switzerland in 1933, and from there, moved to Argentina. In 1936, after Karl Heinz was fired from the bank, he moved to Kitzingen, Germany, to help manage the accounting books of a friend who was being forced to sell off his wine business. He lived with the Oppenheimer family in Kitzingen between the summer of 1936 and November 1938. The Jewish men of Kitzingen, including Karl Heinz and the Oppenheimers, were arrested on Kristallnacht and sent to Dachau, where Mr. Oppenheimer died. Karl Heinz was released at the end of January 1939 after his parents paid for his release and purchased a ticket for him to Shanghai. On June 13, 1939, Karl Heinz left for Shanghai on the Gneisenau, stopping in Bombay, Singapore, and Hong Kong. After arriving in Shanghai, he learned that his mother passed away the day he left Germany--he believed that she committed suicide. Siegfried Praeger was murdered in Auschwitz in 1943. In Shanghai, Karl Heinz worked as a photographer, was permitted to leave the Jewish quarter, and captured many scenes of Chinese life during the war. He met Felicitas Hoffmann (1918-1986), an Austrian refugee who came to Shanghai from Great Britain in 1939. They married on October 11, 1942. They had one son, Jack (1945-1978), who was born in Shanghai on February 15, 1945. In the spring of 1947, the family immigrated to the United States on the SS Marine Lynx, arriving in San Francisco on April 7, 1947. Karl Heinz became "Heinz" and Felicitas took the name "Phyllis." They moved to Boston to join Phyllis's relatives. Jack passed away on May 23, 1978, and Phyllis on March 9, 1986. Heinz Praeger passed away on April 20, 1997.

Scope and content of collection

The Heinz Praeger papers include biographical materials, photographs, and printed materials documenting Heinz Praeger, his prewar life in Germany, and his wartime years as a refugee with his wife and son in Shanghai.

Biographical materials include three copies of a brief biography of Heinz Praeger by Michael Carlon describing Praeger's childhood in Berlin, antisemitic persecution in the 1930s, his imprisonment in Dachau after Kristallnacht, his relocation to Shanghai, meeting and marrying his wife, the birth of their son, the family's immigration to the United States, and their lives in New England. This series also includes a handful of identification papers documenting Praeger and his wife before they left Europe.

Photographs include an album containing images of prewar German towns including Kitzingen, Iphofen, Mainbernheim, Sulzfeld am Main, and Rothenburg ob der Tauber. Loose photographs document Praeger's life in Shanghai and include images of his wife and son. This series also includes three images of the 1936 Berlin Olympic Games.

Printed materials include two Japanese publications (one with an advertisement for Praeger on page 429), a page from the *Shanghai Jewish Chronicle* announcing the birth of Praeger's son; and a 1993 clipping about the Kitzingen synagogue.

System of arrangement

The Heinz Praeger papers are arranged in three series:

Series 1: Biographical materials, 1934-1939, circa 1997-2018

Series 2: Photographs, circa 1918-1960

Series 3: Printed materials, circa 1939-1945, 1993

Indexing terms

Jews--Germany--Berlin.

Jewish refugees--China--Shanghai.

Hongkou Qu (Shanghai, China)

Shanghai (China)

Biographies.

Photographs.

CONTAINER LIST

Series 1: Biographical materials, 1934-1939, circa 1997-2018

| Box/Folder | |
|-------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1 of 9 | Biography, circa 1997 |
| 2 of 9 | Biography, circa 2015 |
| 3 of 9 | Biography, circa 2018 |
| 4 of 9 | Identification papers, 1934-1939 |

Series 2: Photographs, circa 1918-1960

| Box/Folder | |
|-------------------|---------------------------------|
| 5 of 9 | Berlin Olympics, 1936 |
| Box 1 | Germany album, circa 1918-1942 |
| 6 of 9 | Praeger family, circa 1942-1960 |
| 7 -8 of 9, OS 1 | Shanghai, circa 1939-1947 |

Series 3: Printed materials, circa 1939-1945, 1993

| Box/Folder | |
|-------------------|--|
| 9 of 9, OS 2 | Printed materials, circa 1939-1945, 1993 |