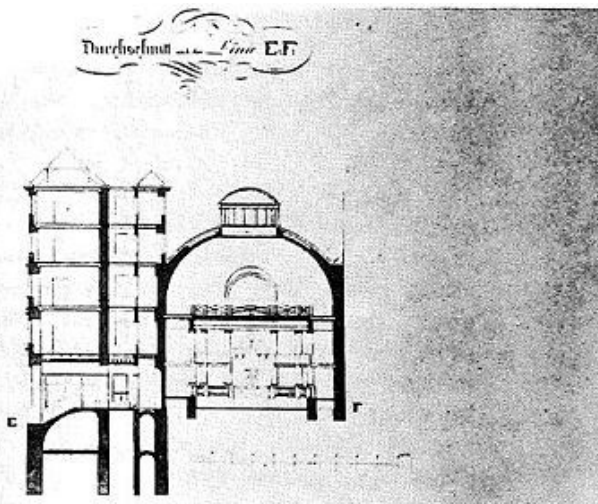


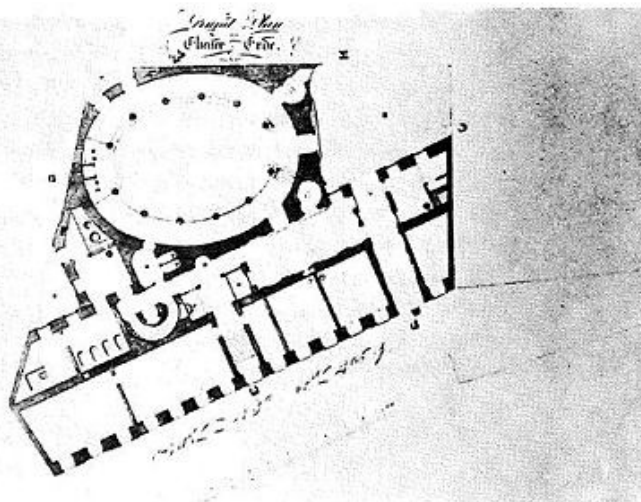
## The Seitenstetten-Tempel or The Stadttempel

The so called Stadttempel in the Seitenstettengasse 4, 1010 Vienna, is Vienna's main and oldest Synagogue. It was built in the years 1824-1826 in a Neo-Classical style after the plans of the well known Austrian Architect J. Kornhäusel (1). It was officially opened on the 9<sup>th</sup> of April 1826 and the first Rabbi of the Stadttempel was Isak Noa Mannheimer.

It was constructed similar to a residential building because at that time only churches were allowed to be free-standing. The Nazis did not dare to burn it down in the Reichskristallnacht (9<sup>th</sup>/10<sup>th</sup> November 1938) since there was the risk that the neighboring houses would go up in flames as well. All the other synagogues in Vienne were destroyed. It also had a school and a mikvah (2) inside it. The interior, which was destroyed by the Nazis, was reconstructed and restored after the war.



The synagogue was built behind a residential building.



It was built as a long oval domed central room and is topped with an umbrella like dome. Around the oval main prayer hall are twelve Ionic columns supporting the second and the third gallery.

On the ground floor only men are allowed to pray, while women have to go to the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> gallery.



The Bimah (3) is on the east side of the hall.

Above the Bimah are the Tablets of the Law within a golden sunburst and the dome is painted in blue with golden stars.



It was one of the most innovative structures in Vienna at the time of its erection and it served as a model for other synagogue buildings in Western Europe. It became the first official Ashkenazi communal synagogue. The prayers were conducted according to the Reform liturgy.

At the opening ceremony of the Synagogue on April, 9<sup>th</sup> 1826 a composition by Franz Schubert was performed by the famous cantor Salomon Sulzer (4).

After the war, the "Stadttempel" was the only synagogue in Vienna that had not been completely destroyed during the Kristallnacht. It was repaired after the war and reopened.

In August 1949 the coffins of Theodor Herzl (5) and his parents were displayed at the synagogue, prior to their transfer for burial in Israel.

Today you can also find a memorial site in the foyer of the Vienna Stadttempel which was opened at the end of 2002. It is a memorial for the 65,000 assassinated Austrian Jews, whose names are engraved on rotating slate tablets. Nearly the whole Jewish community was destroyed between 1938 and 1945.

#### Legend:

1. Joseph Georg Kornhäusel (13<sup>th</sup> November 1782 in Vienna; † 31<sup>st</sup> October 1860 ) was an Austrian architect at the beginning of the first half of the 19th century
2. Mikvah is a ritual bath designed for the purpose of ritual immersion in Judaism.
3. Bimah is the elevated area or platform in a Jewish synagogue which is intended to serve as the place where the person reading aloud from the Torah stands during the Torah reading service.
4. Salomon Sulzer, first chief Kantor (born in Hohenems in 1804, died in 1890 in Vienna) was friends with Franz Liszt, Franz Schubert and Franz Grillparzer, reformed liturgical songs
5. Theodor Herzl (\* 2nd 1860 in Pest, today Budapest † 3rd July 1904 in Edlach, Reichenau an der Rax, Lower Austria). He was an Austria writer, journalist and a Politician. He wrote the book „Judenstaat“ in 1896 and is considered to have been one of the founders of the State of Israel.

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