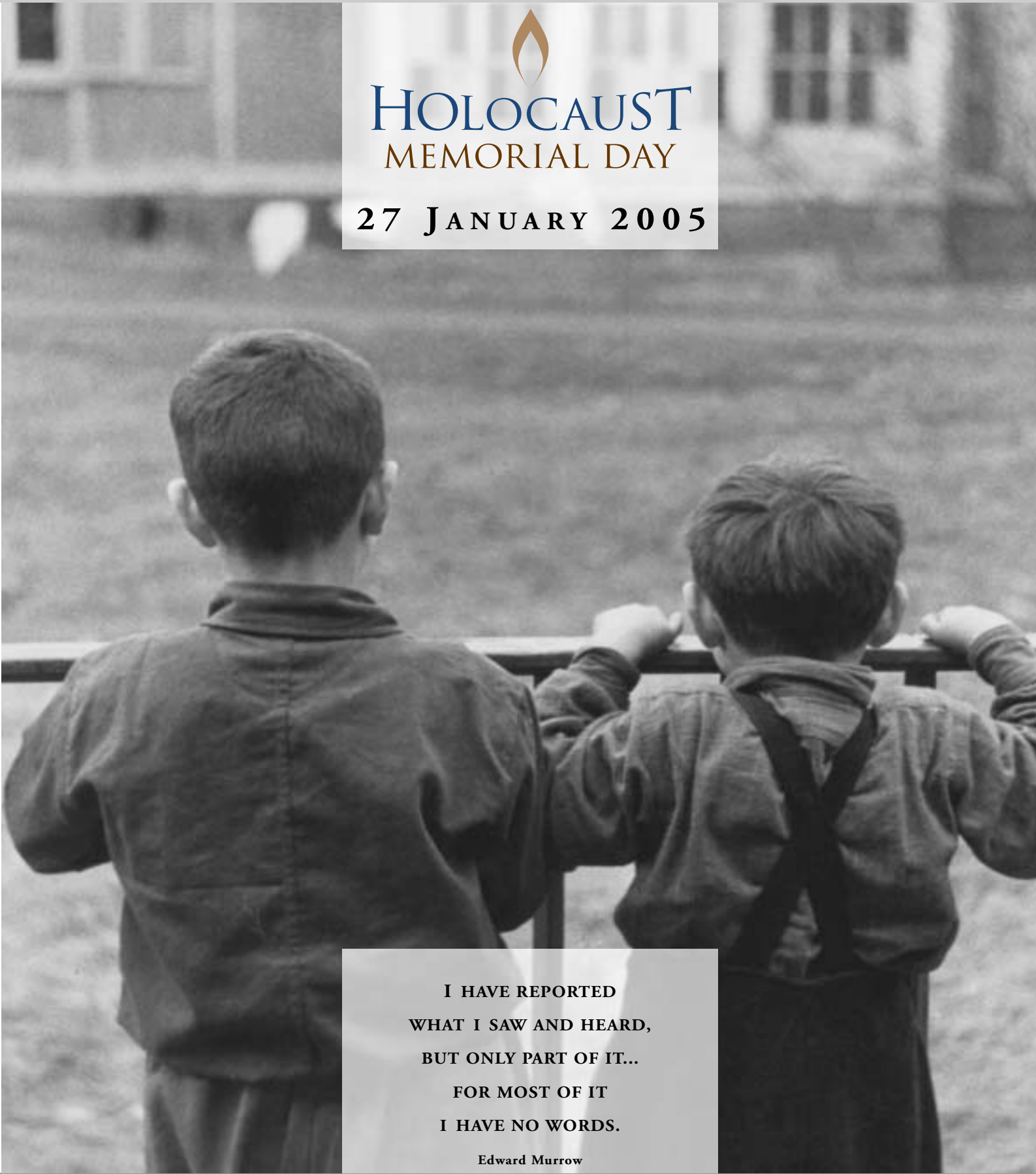



# WIENER LIBRARY NEWS

MARCH 2005

NUMBER 47



  
**HOLOCAUST**  
MEMORIAL DAY  
**27 JANUARY 2005**

I HAVE REPORTED  
WHAT I SAW AND HEARD,  
BUT ONLY PART OF IT..  
FOR MOST OF IT  
I HAVE NO WORDS.

Edward Murrow

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Commemoration

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Concept of Genocide

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Archives

## GIFT OF ART

### MARTINE MARTINE



The renowned French artist Mme Martine Martine has donated one of her paintings to the Library, in recognition of its outstanding achievements and contributions. The work, entitled *Livres à la soupière bleue*, depicts books lying open on a green table next to a blue soup tureen. The painting has been hung in the Reading Room Annexe, where all users of the Library can enjoy it (although our librarians wish to point out that they do not encourage our readers to leave the Library's books piled in this fashion after use!)

Everyone at the Library has been greatly moved by Mme Martine's generous gift. We would also like to thank Mme Martine's fellow artist, M. Andre Elbaz, who himself has made a generous gift to the Library and whose discussions with Mme Martine about the Library and its work first gave her the inspiration to make this lovely gift.

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#### WIENER LIBRARY NEWS

JOINT EDITORS: BEN BARKOW AND  
KATHERINE KLINGER

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# 60TH ANNIVERSARY COMMEMORATION



*Forced Labour camp near Chemnitz after liberation, 1945.*

**A**n unprecedented series of events marking the 60th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz took place nationally and internationally during the latter part of January 2005, culminating in **Holocaust Memorial Day on 27 January.**

The Wiener Library was closely involved with preparations for the main National event, coordinated by the Home Office. The Library's director, Ben Barkow, was a key member of the main commemorative event steering group, responsible for advising and contributing to the day's programme. In addition, Ben, together with Katherine Klinger, who runs the Education and Outreach programme at the Library, was asked to design and write the programme brochure for the main commemorative event at Westminster Hall. Ben and Katherine were also asked to introduce a small group of survivors to the Queen and Prince Phillip at St James' Palace.

As Newsletter readers are probably aware, the main events on Holocaust Memorial Day included a private reception hosted by Her Majesty the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh at St James' Palace for 600 survivors and liberators and a commemorative service for 1400 invited guests at Westminster Hall. The solemnity and dignity of the day were poignantly echoed by the commemoration event broadcast live from Auschwitz, which was blanketed by thick snow and visibly freezing weather conditions.

The theme chosen for this year's national HMD was, appropriately, 'Survivors, Liberation and Rebuilding Lives'. The focus was thus on survivors who had found refuge in the UK post-1945 and built up their lives against extraordinary odds. For many of those involved, it was the courage and resilience of individuals that was perhaps, finally, publicly acknowledged. The paradox of the contrast between the experiences of sixty years ago and the location of the Day's events was frequently remarked upon. Significantly, in spite of the grandeur of St James' Palace and Westminster Hall, there was an atmosphere of humility, perhaps generated by the presence of so many survivors.

Even in a world of political cynicism and spin, it seemed as if, for a moment, the magnitude and consequences of what happened to European Jewry between 1933 and 1945 were briefly grasped, respected and honoured.

# INTERNATIONAL WORKSHOP

**The Wiener Library – together with its partners in the European Network for Research into Historical and Current Antisemitism – held a one-day international workshop on *Antisemitism in Europe Today: Academic Approaches*.**

The workshop took place on Sunday 23 January and formed part of the Library's Holocaust Memorial Day activities. It was organised jointly by the Library and the Leo Baeck Institute, in co-operation with the Centre for German-Jewish Studies at Sussex University.

The day was opened by Professor Peter Pulzer, Wiener Library and Leo Baeck Institute, who gave a wonderfully lucid introduction concerning the history of European antisemitism.

The first presentation was given by Antony Lerman, Chief Executive of the Hanadiv Foundation, formerly Director of the Institute of Jewish Affairs (Jewish Policy Research). He examined *The Problems of Monitoring Antisemitism*, outlining the many complex and inter-related issues involved in setting up and running international monitoring programmes. These include how to arrive at a definition of 'antisemitism' which can be applied meaningfully and consistently across different countries and over longer periods of time.

This issue was later expanded upon by the philosopher Professor Brian Klug of St Xavier University Chicago and St Benet's Hall, Oxford. Klug argued that sensitivity is needed to distinguish between incidents which superficially appear antisemitic but may in some instances have other, legitimate causes, and genuine attacks based on hatred of Jews for simply being Jews.

The French sociologist Michel Wieviorka, Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales, outlined his research among Arabic and Muslim youths in France among whom anger at social exclusion and discrimination expresses itself in violently antisemitic language and acts.

Professor Ruth Wodak, University of Lancaster, gave a powerful analysis of speeches by Austrian far-right politician Joerg Haider. Using the tools of linguistics, she exposed Haider's virulent antisemitism contained in language 'coded' to communicate its true meaning to his sympathisers, while concealing its real intent from the wider public.

Further events of the Network are in preparation and it is hoped that this collaborative venture can contribute approaches to this dangerously emotive subject which strive for scholarly objectivity and detachment.



*Is there a new wave of antisemitism sweeping across Europe? The notorious 'Fagin' Labour Party poster, which fuelled controversy through its apparently antisemitic message about Conservative Party leader Michael Howard.*

## SUSSEX UNIVERSITY

### HMD EVENT

For the past three years the Centre for German-Jewish Studies at Sussex University and the Leo Baeck Institute, London have jointly held a Holocaust Memorial Day event at Sussex University, particularly aimed at students, as well as members of the local community.

This year, the Wiener Library was delighted to be part of the event, held on 26 January, which was generously supported by the Association of Jewish Refugees.

A record number of over 300 people attended the afternoon, crowding the auditorium in silence to hear Jan Ilich, a survivor, recall some of his experiences in Poland. After a brief question and answer session, the afternoon continued with acclaimed writer Eva Hoffman, in conversation with the Wiener Library's Katherine Klinger.

Eva reflected on some of the issues raised in her most recent book *After Such Knowledge* – one of the most profound meditations to be written in recent years on the aftermath of the Holocaust.

The Wiener Library greatly appreciated the work of Chana Moshenska, who organised the event and Diana Franklin, who ensured that everything ran so smoothly.

### AND A BIG THANK-YOU

**These events and the Lempkin lecture were generously supported by the Association of Jewish Refugees (AJR). We extend our grateful thanks to them for their steadfast commitment to our work.**

# RAPHAEL LEMKIN AND THE CONCEPT OF GENOCIDE

**J**ust a few years ago, the Polish-Jewish jurist Raphael Lemkin (1901-1959) could be described by the *New York Times* as a “largely forgotten immigrant from Poland who coined the word genocide and pushed a convention outlawing it through the General Assembly.” Only with the creation of the International Tribunal for Crimes in former Yugoslavia in 1993 and the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) in 1994, which secured the first ever conviction for the crime of genocide, has Lemkin emerged from undeserved obscurity.

Historian Dirk Moses notes that among historians “recent research is returning to the Lemkian origins of the concept by stressing the links between the Holocaust and other instances of ethnically motivated mass murder and extermination.” Similarly, Omer Bartov writes that Lemkin has also found strong supporters for his powerful argument that there is a close interrelationship between war, genocide, and modern identity. Despite the relative neglect of his contribution, there has been more than a decade of intense discussion of the limits and weaknesses of the concept of genocide.

## Defining genocide

In his first attempt to define genocide in *Axis Rule in Occupied Europe* (1944) Lemkin included a broad array of techniques of destruction “to signify a coordinated plan of different actions aiming at the destruction of essential foundations of the life of national groups, with the aim of annihilating the groups themselves. The objectives of such a plan would be disintegration of

the political and social institutions, of culture, language, national feelings, religion, and the economic existence of national groups, and the destruction of the personal security, liberty, health, dignity, and even the lives of the individuals belonging to such groups.”

## Genocide Convention

According to the Genocide Convention, adopted on 9 December 1948, “genocide means any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such: (a) Killing members of the group; (b) Causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group; (c) Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part; (d) Imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group; (e) Forcibly transferring children of the group to another group.”

Subsequently, Helen Fein and others would extend Lemkin’s construction to include more diverse victim groups – political groups and classes – or expand his notion of perpetrators to include not merely states and individuals, but also “representatives” of the nation-state, including soldiers, settlers, and missionaries.

There is no doubt that the concept of genocide and the United Nations Genocide Convention are, as Lemkin believed they would be, milestones in the progress of international legislation and humanitarian rights. Whatever its basic conceptual flaws and lack of political efficacy, the Genocide Convention established for the first time a normative legal basis for the behaviour of states toward their own people.

Still, the problem, perhaps the

impossibility, of finding a heuristic definition that would encompass the wide variety of genocides that have taken place both during the 20th century and in the historical past is considerable. The Convention specified that there must be intent to destroy (not eliminate) in whole or in part four types of victim group – “national, ethnical, racial or religious” – and included six acts that “in whole or in part” count as genocide – killing, causing serious bodily or mental harm, inflicting conditions of life calculated to bring about destruction, imposing measures intended to prevent births, and the forcible transfer of children from the group.” In other words, the definition is excessively vague about the significance of “intent” versus “consequence,” “physical” versus “cultural” destruction, and of course, the degree or magnitude required for mass murder to rise to the level of “genocide.”

## Debatable claim

Whether courts or juridical decisions can ever render justice in the face of crimes of history (rather than punish criminal behaviour *per se*) is debatable; certainly to claim that law could do so exclusively is hubris. Lemkin believed that certain words “carry in themselves a moral judgment” and that they are “the reply of man to social need.” Not without irony, Lemkin’s admirers have marveled at his single-minded belief in the efficacy of both law and language to alter reality. In an age when the word Holocaust often attests to the inability of language to communicate the horror inflicted by the Nazis, Lemkin’s almost naive belief that language translated into law could not merely instantiate justice, but actually prevent mass murder, appears almost quaint. Legal decisions

and legal thought are themselves part of the flux of historical memory, all the more so in Lemkin's case, despite his efforts to fix crimes juridically.

Though Lemkin believed that the "great force of the genocide convention lies in the fact that it declares the crime of Genocide to be a non-political crime," his efforts to secure its acceptance and adoption demonstrate that issues of international law are no less political than those affecting domestic law. He firmly believed that genocide was a matter of natural right, no different in principle from homicide: "as in the case of homicide, the natural right of existence for individuals is implied: by the formulation of genocide as a crime, the principle that every national, racial and religious group has a natural right of existence is claimed." The problem of the genocide concept however, reveals the difficulties of translating supranational principles in a world where international law and sovereignty remained and remain intimately entwined.

### Historical origins

The ambiguity of "genocide" can in large part be attributed to Lemkin's universalisation of the specific events of the destruction of European Jewry and the annihilation of the Polish "nation" (ethno-national murder) without adequately reflecting on its own historicity. Put another way, the concept of genocide has its historical origins in the last phase of World War II (1944) and implicitly affirms the victory of the moral norm of positive law against the "laws of nature" or "biology" practised and reiterated by the Germans during the Nazification of Europe.

Lemkin repeated the story of the origins of the concept of genocide many times during his career, but with different emphases. He insisted that he first envisioned the concept in 1933 but only invented the term in 1943 while writing *Axis Rule in Occupied Europe* (published in 1944). This was no mere vanity on Lemkin's part. It set forth a narrative in which the concept of "genocide" antedated and anticipated the murder of European Jewry – and of 49 members of his own family, including

his parents. By dating the origin of the concept to the decade prior to the Holocaust, Lemkin could and often did disassociate the origin of the term from his personal experiences as a Jew and a Pole, situating it in the pre-Nazi (or early Nazi) era.

### Fundamentally different

"Genocide" thus combined elements of what Lemkin had called "acts of barbarity" and "acts of vandalism" into a single "generic concept." It also drew directly on the then recent fate of Poles and Jews to articulate a concept of group annihilation that was fundamentally different from other kinds of forcible assimilation (Germanisation) and "denationalisation." As Lemkin explained: "The author believes, however, that this word is inadequate because: 1) it does not connote the destruction of the biological structure; 2) in connoting the destruction of one national pattern it does not connote the imposition of the national pattern of the oppressor; and 3) denationalisation is used by some authors to mean only deprivation of citizenship." It is evident that biological destruction is applied here to both Jews and Poles. Lemkin explicitly rejected such terms such as "denationalisation" or "Germanisation," because such terms did not adequately underscore "the irreducible biological core of genocide such as causing the physical decline and even destruction of the population involved."

Another difficulty is that Lemkin frequently elided the distinction between genocide as a "modern" crime and as a universal feature of mankind throughout history. Furthermore, there is a considerable gap between the magnitude of Lemkin's 1944 example and his frequent recourse to more culturally restricted cases, where he argued for minority rights and the protection of minority cultures that he had foregrounded in 1933. Genocide, he argued, affects "the vital interests of all civilised people." Since minorities exist in all countries, if their persecution is tolerated anywhere, the very moral and legal foundations of constitutional government may be shaken. Its toleration "is an admission of the

## "History, not courts, Dubnow reminded the young lawyer, sits in judgment"

principle that one national group has the right to attack another because of its supposed racial superiority."

In the late fall of 1939, after he reached neutral Vilnius and successfully applied for a Swedish passport, the young Polish lawyer and former state prosecutor of Warsaw Raphael Lemkin arrived in Riga to await passage to Stockholm and ultimately to the United States. In Riga he paid a visit to the Jewish historian Simon Dubnow at his home in Kaiserswald. Lemkin told him of his plan to "outlaw the destruction of peoples" and Dubnow agreed. "The most appalling part about this type of killing," said Dubnow, "is that in the past it has ceased to be a crime when large numbers are involved and when all of them happen to belong to the same nationality, or race, or religion. ... Let nations take their choice whether they want to belong to the civilised world community. I have always felt that history must sit in judgment." Perhaps an apocryphal story, but not one that is as flattering to Lemkin as he might have thought. History, not courts, (even if such a law were to exist), Dubnow reminded the young lawyer, sits in judgment. Had Lemkin been a historian and not a jurist, he might have wondered about the fate of his law in history.

*This extract is a short version of a lecture delivered by Professor Anson Rabinbach on 27 January 2005 at the Wiener Library. An extended version of this article was originally presented as the Fourth Simon-Dubnow Lecture at the Simon Dubnow Institute for Jewish History and Culture at the University of Leipzig on 18 December 2003.*

**Anson Rabinbach is Professor of History and Director of the Program in European Cultural Studies at Princeton University.**

## NEW WEBSITE LAUNCHED

After considerable hard work, the new Wiener Library website was launched at the beginning of November 2004.

The new website includes our full book catalogue as well as all document descriptions, which are now searchable online. Thus, our collections are far more accessible to readers, and online visits to the site have increased significantly.



In the last week of October 2004, the Library's website had 2,329 hits; this has now quadrupled, and during the week starting 14 February there were 8,461 hits. During the week of Holocaust Memorial Day hits to the website peaked at 16,183.

The availability of the catalogue online has also enabled us to introduce bar-coded membership cards since the beginning of February. In addition to increasing security, the cards allow members to check their borrowing details. Eventually, readers will be able to reserve books from home. Borrowing books electronically also means that readers are aware that a book is out on loan when they search the catalogue.

## RECENT PUBLICATIONS

# MANES AND ARENDT

**T**wo important books have appeared in Germany based on the Library's collection and activities.

Ben Barkow and Klaus Leist have edited the 1000 page manuscript written by Philipp Manes during his incarceration in Theresienstadt from July 1942 to October 1944.

The result of nearly five years work, the volume, entitled *Als ob's ein Leben wär: Tatsachenbericht Theresienstadt 1942-1944*, offers a quite remarkable insight into the workings of the Czech ghetto/concentration camp. It is also a moving portrait of a German Jew and patriot struggling to come to terms with his persecution while retaining his love of his homeland.

Manes, who was a fur-trader before the war, was a slave labourer until July 1942, when he and his wife Gertrud were deported to Theresienstadt. There he was a lowly member of the Jewish self-administration, but his chief work was in organising an impressive programme of lectures and other cultural events – over 500 evenings – for his fellow inmates.

His 'documentary report', as he calls it, reveals Manes as an ordinary man who became extraordinary and even heroic in response to being stripped by the Nazis of his home, his work and his citizenship.

Katherine Klinger and Waltraud Meintz have jointly edited the papers given at a conference – *Hannah Arendt: Politics and Responsibility* – organised by the Library and the University of Hanover, in association with the Forum for European Philosophy and New York University in London in November 2002.

The volume, *Politik und Verantwortung: zur Aktualität von Hannah Arendt*, includes contributions by leading Arendt scholars including Nancy Fraser, Julia Kristeva and Margaret Conovan and also contains two papers by Arendt, never before published in Germany.

The book also features a chapter by Rabbi Albert Friedlander in what was, sadly, to be his last published contribution. Rabbi Friedlander died as the book was in preparation.

Philipp Manes, *Als ob's ein Leben wär: Tatsachenbericht Theresienstadt 1942-1944*, Hrsg. Ben Barkow und Klaus Leist, Berlin, Ullstein Verlag, 2005 / Waltraud Meintz und Katherine Klinger, Hrsg. *Politik und Verantwortung: zur Aktualität von Hannah Arendt*, Hannover, Offizin Verlag, 2005.



Philipp Manes, drawn a few weeks before his deportation to Auschwitz, where he and his wife were murdered in late 1944.

## SUCCESS OF PROJECT

After 6 years the Heritage Lottery project at the Library was brought to a successful end in December 2004. During that time 8 retrospective cataloguers entered ca. 40,000 books, 11,000 microfilm records and 7,000 pamphlets onto the computer catalogue. The first-ever archivist was hired and he has created detailed catalogue descriptions for ca. 800 document collections. Under the watchful eye of the conservator NADFAS (National Association of Decorative and Fine Arts Societies) volunteers have conserved ca. 8,000 pamphlets. Altogether the Heritage Lottery Project has been a great success for the Library.

## IMAGES FROM THE ARCHIVES

# SURVIVORS

Built in the 1930s as a forced-labour camp for the company IG Farben, Föhrenwald became a settlement for displaced persons in 1945, including survivors from the Dachau concentration camp. Bergen-Belsen became after liberation the largest displaced persons' camp in Germany, a thriving, self-governed Jewish community, and the centre for Jewish political and social activity in the British Zone of Occupation.



*Barber shop at Föhrenwald DP camp.*



*The fire service of Föhrenwald camp during a drill.*



*A DP at Bergen-Belsen after liberation.*



*The crowded platform before the first train from Belsen DP camp leaves for the transit camp and Palestine.*

## MAKING NEW FRIENDS

The Library has launched a new initiative to increase its support and spread the word about its work and collections.

As the Library prepares itself for the move to new premises – which must take place no later than summer 2009 – the need to boost our Endowment Fund has taken on great importance. In order to help achieve this the Library's Friends Scheme has been relaunched. New Friends of the Library will join for £200 per annum. Existing friends will be able to renew their membership for the fees familiar to them or upgrade to the new level if they wish.

A further initiative to introduce new support and raise funds has been a series of early evening events at which 12-15 guests are invited to visit us, hear three short presentations about the work and importance of the Library, tour the collections and have a chance to ask questions and contribute to the discussion of how the Library can progress further.

The evenings have been the brainchild of Edward Freedman, member of the Executive Committee, who has hosted two evenings. Three of Edward's guests were so impressed and moved by what they saw that they in turn have got together to host two further evenings for their friends. Richard Bolchover and James Freedman also hosted evenings. In this way we hope to build up a network of interested contacts who can help us to secure our future.

We are very grateful indeed to everyone who has helped to organise these evenings and, indeed, to all who have given up their time to attend.

More evenings are planned throughout the year.

# FORTHCOMING EVENTS

## WIENER LIBRARY/LEO BAECK INSTITUTE/ CENTRE FOR GERMAN-JEWISH STUDIES LECTURES AT THE WIENER LIBRARY

**15 MARCH 2005**

ORIGINS AND ANGELS:  
KARL KRAUS'S RELIGIOUS  
IDEAS

**PROFESSOR EDWARD TIMMS**,  
Centre for German-Jewish Studies,  
University of Sussex

*Kraus was a double renegade, rejecting both church and synagogue, yet there was still a religious dimension to his writings. Walter Benjamin and Gershom Scholem's debate on this aspect of Kraus's writings is the main theme of this lecture.*

MAX AND HILDE KOCHMANN  
MEMORIAL LECTURE

**22 MARCH 2005**

'YES, YOU HAVE TO FORGIVE YOUR  
ENEMIES, BUT NOT BEFORE THEY ARE  
HANGED'

**DR Jael Geis**, Berlin

*The majority of Jews living in Germany immediately after the war expressed very little desire for revenge. Why? Dr Geis will investigate issues relating to estrangement, isolation, self-preservation and the teachings of Judaism.*

**12 APRIL 2005**

VOLUNTEERS AGAINST FASCISM, YET  
VICTIMS OF DICTATORSHIP: THE STALIN  
ERA

**DR CYNTHIA HOOPER**, Columbia  
University

*The lecture will explore the efforts of Soviet leaders and ordinary citizens to distinguish between Nazi Germany and Stalinist Russia in the post-Stalin period.*

**4 MAY 2005**

COERCION AND CONSENT IN NAZI  
GERMANY

**PROFESSOR RICHARD J. EVANS**,  
University of Cambridge

*This lecture will argue that it is time to take a fresh look at the balance of coercion and consent in Nazi Germany.*

All lectures start at 7pm and are held at

The Wiener Library, 4 Devonshire Street, London W1W 5BH [www.wienerlibrary.co.uk](http://www.wienerlibrary.co.uk)

Please telephone / email to register: 020 7580 3493 / [info@leobaeck.co.uk](mailto:info@leobaeck.co.uk)

Admission free

## LIBRARY OPEN DAY

SUNDAY 8 MAY, 2-5 PM

**C**oinciding with the 60th anniversary of the end of the War, the Library is holding a special Open Day for everyone interested in viewing the collection.

Visitors will gain a unique insight into the workings of the Library and be invited to tour the basement archive collection, which is generally not open to the public.

There will be a brief introductory talk followed by tours of the basement, in-depth information about current activities and projects and, of course, opportunities to sample delicious *Kaffee und Kuchen*.

Visitors will be also able to watch NADFAS volunteers at work conserving fragile items from the collection. Our

conservator, Georgia Vossou, will be on hand to advise people about preservation measures for old documents and there will be the opportunity to buy archival acid-free folders and boxes to protect documents.

The Library's archivist, Howard Falksohn, will be available to explain procedures regarding document donations, and give advice concerning how to sort family papers.

Jeanette Rosenberg from the Jewish Genealogical Society of Great Britain will also give a talk on tracing ancestors and finding out about relatives known to have perished in the Holocaust.

Please register in advance – so we don't run out of cakes!

**On the front cover:** The Wiener Library was given sole responsibility for producing the official programme for the national event to mark Holocaust Memorial Day this year. The cover of the programme is reproduced here. The editors were Ben Barkow and Katherine Klinger – the team that also brings you the Newsletter.