

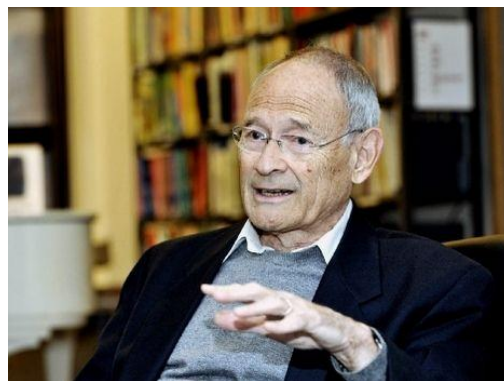
THE CENTRAL EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY
JEWISH STUDIES PROJECT
AND
PASTS, INC. CENTER FOR HISTORICAL STUDIES

cordially invite you to a lecture by

Ladislau Löb

Kasztner – Hero or Traitor? By one of the survivors

Rezső Kasztner – lawyer, journalist and Zionist activist from Kolozsvár (Cluj) – was one of the most controversial figures of the Holocaust. Tempers still rise whenever he is mentioned, with some calling him a hero and others a traitor. It was thanks to a deal Kasztner made with Adolf Eichmann that some 1,670 Hungarian Jews were released to Switzerland from Bergen-Belsen concentration camp before the end of World War II. He may have saved thousands more or – if one is to believe his enemies – he helped Eichmann deport nearly half a million to Auschwitz. In the 1950s, in a sensational trial in Israel, a judge found Kasztner guilty of collaboration. He was cleared on appeal, but before he could hear the verdict he was assassinated in Tel Aviv. The reasons are still unclear, but the consequences for Israeli politics have been momentous.



Ladislau Löb spent five months in Bergen-Belsen at the age of eleven. More than 60 years later he published Rezső Kasztner: The Daring Rescue of Hungarian Jews, in which he combines his own memories with historical research. This talk will concentrate on Kasztner's negotiations with Eichmann, the trial in Israel and the captives' everyday life in Bergen-Belsen. It will ask whether Kasztner was a hero or a traitor and consider the moral implications of engaging with evil to save some lives where millions perished.

Tuesday, January 31 at 6 p.m.
Gellner Room, Monument Building
Budapest, 1051 Nádor utca 9.

Ladislau Löb (Löb László) was born on 8 May 1933 in Cluj, Transylvania. In 1944 he spent five months in the concentration camp of Bergen-Belsen before he was rescued by Rezső Kasztner and taken to Switzerland. He grew up in Zurich, where he obtained his doctorate in English and German and worked as a school teacher and journalist. In 1963 he joined the University of Sussex in Brighton, UK, and was in due course promoted to Professor of German. He held visiting professorships in the University of Konstanz in Germany and Middlebury College, Vermont, USA. He has published widely on German, English and Comparative Literature and since his retirement become known as a translator from German (e.g. Weininger and Nietzsche) and Hungarian (esp. Béla Zsolt's *Nine Suitcases*). In 2008 he published *Dealing with Satan. Rezső Kasztner's Daring Rescue Mission*, a combination of autobiography and history of the Holocaust (translated into German, Finnish, Chinese and Hungarian as *Megvásárolt életek. Kasztner Rezső vakmerő mentőakciója*).

A reception will follow