

# Introduction

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Emma Rothschild, Chairman of The Rothschild Archive Trust

The contributions to the sixth *Review of the Year* reflect the diverse research interests of the Archive's users. The collections are literally worldwide in scope, and include resources for financial, political and industrial history, the history of communications, philanthropy, art, horticulture, and education. The Archive's London reading room has been visited this year by scholars associated with universities from Budapest to Brasilia, and with interests in topics from decorative arts in Russia to the politics of the 19th century Ottoman Empire; many more use the Research Forum of the Archive's web site, [www.rothschildarchive.org](http://www.rothschildarchive.org). We are delighted that the first Rothschild Archive Bursary was awarded to Hans Willems of the University of Antwerp; an indication of the significance of the collection for his research is presented in this *Review* (see page 14).

The *Review* also contains an account of an important development: the transfer of ownership of the records of de Rothschild Frères from the Rothschild family to the Trust (see page 49). The Trust wishes to express its deep appreciation to members of the family who so readily agreed to the proposal that the future of these records should be the responsibility of this Trust.

The research project hosted by the Archive, with the generous support of the Hanadiv Charitable Foundation, *The Jewish Community and Social Development in Europe 1800–1940*, has entered a new phase, thanks to a grant from the Fritz Thyssen Stiftung (Cologne), for whose support the Trustees express their great appreciation. The funding enables a team of four researchers to examine in detail the surviving source material in Austria, France, Germany, Italy and Israel under the guidance of Dr Klaus Weber. The Thyssen Foundation will also support an international workshop at the Archive, on Jewish and non-Jewish welfare and charity, which will place the project in a wider context.

The board of Trustees has changed in the past year. Victor Gray has retired as Director, and has been replaced by Melanie Aspey. We are delighted that Victor Gray has joined the board of Trustees, as has Julien Sereys de Rothschild. One of the founding Trustees, Professor David Landes of Harvard University, has, to our great regret, decided to retire from the board, in order to have more time for research and writing. We are proud of his association with us, which will continue in a less formal way in the future, and we thank him for playing such an important role in the early years of the Trust. Professor Landes was succeeded, in 2005, by Professor David Cannadine of the University of London, who is himself a contributor to this *Review*, and whom we welcome to the Archive.