It was early March 1963 in Chicago. I had nearly finished writing my Ph.D. dissertation and I was invited to visit Cincinnati for a job interview by Samuel Sandmel, who was then Provost. This was an unexpected and pleasant surprise. (I later learned that Julius Lewy, who was head of the search, had previously made confidential inquiries about me to several professors; these things were done differently in those days!) I accepted the invitation and subsequently a position offered to me as Instructor in Semitic Languages. (I became Assistant Professor when my degree was awarded in December 1963.)

My wife, Lesha, had accompanied me on my visit to Cincinnati, and we both felt very positive about what we learned concerning the institution and those who received us. Many of the faculty were already known to me, some personally and others by reputation. I had met Julius Lewy and his wife, Hildegard, at meetings of the American Oriental Society, where I had delivered a number of papers; I had read books written by Nelson Glueck, Samuel Sandmel and Jacob Marcus, and owned their books in my personal library; and I had consulted some writings by Sheldon Blank. I soon met numerous other scholars among whom I was proud and privileged to call myself a colleague.

I had also been impressed by graduates of HUC-JIR whom Lesha and I had met in Chicago, most notably Rabbi Maurice Pekarsky, a much beloved Hillel Director at the University of Chicago, under whom I had done a few programs. I had also met a coterie of younger rabbis who, like me, were pursuing Ph.Ds. at Chicago. I knew less about the School of Graduate Studies, but I had read about its offerings and its generous fellowships on flyers posted on bulletin boards at the University of Chicago.

I was very much looking forward to teaching at HUC-JIR in Cincinnati. From the outset I hoped to teach in both the rabbinical and graduate programs, but there were some hurdles. One was course load. There were two rabbinical programs: the “senior,” five-year postgraduate rabbinical program and a four-
We begin the spring 2014 semester by welcoming the new president of HUC-JIR, Rabbi Aaron Panken, Ph.D. Our students, faculty and alumni look forward to a productive and warm relationship in the coming years with President Panken.

The latest updates from the SGS include celebratory events from the fall semester and planned activities for the spring.

**The 2013 Annual SBL Alumni Luncheon in Baltimore**

Eighty-five alumni, students, faculty and friends of the SGS attended the annual Society of Biblical Literature Alumni Luncheon on November 24, 2013. The elegant dining room at the Royal Sonesta Harbor Court was a fitting venue for the occasion where attendees reconnected with old friends, heard news of the SGS, welcomed President Panken and helped celebrate the presentation of a *festschrift* to a beloved teacher and colleague, Dr. Samuel Greengus. The volume, entitled *Windows to the Ancient World of the Hebrew Bible: Essays in Honor of Samuel Greengus*, was born three years following a symposium held on the Cincinnati campus where several of his former students offered scholarly lectures to the HUC and greater Cincinnati community. At the luncheon, two of the three editors, Bill Arnold and John Walton (Nancy Erickson could not attend), presented proofs of the book to their delighted teacher. The *festschrift* features 19 articles by alumni. The occasion was truly joyous with several members of Sam’s family in attendance.

**Academic Placement of Recent Ph.D.s**

We are all aware of the dearth of academic positions in recent years. The competition is intense for the few jobs that do open annually, especially at the university level. I am thrilled to report that one of our recent graduates, Thomas Beyl ('13), and a Ph.D. candidate who will complete his dissertation this spring, Vadim Putzu, beat the odds. Tommy is at Ohio State University in the capacity of Academic Advisor for the Near Eastern Languages and Cultures Department and the Department of East Asian Languages and Literature. Vadim will begin August 2014 as Assistant Professor of Post-Biblical Judaism in the Department of Religious Studies at Missouri State University. A hearty *mazal tov* is in order for both.

**Graduate Summer-in-Israel Program**

When I first came to HUC in 1998 I noted that rabbinical students benefited from an extraordinarily valuable experience not available to graduate students: study in Israel. Students in the SGS could pursue study in Israel on their own, but there was no HUC program for them. With financial support, first by Dean Ehrlich and later by Board of Governors leader Richard Scheuer, together with cooperation by then-director of the Nelson Glueck School of Biblical Archaeology, Avraham Biran, and his staff, a subsidized Graduate Summer-in-Israel Program became a reality in 2000. Since then...
several dozen Ph.D. students have participated in a comprehensive Israel experience, including Hebrew language study, tours of ancient and modern sites, lectures, and field work at an archaeological excavation.

In 2005, with impetus from this program, David Ilan, the new director of the NGSBA, reopened the excavations at HUC’s site, Tel Dan. As we all know, running an excavation is a costly and time-intensive endeavor. There were summers when the excavation at Dan was not functioning and our students had to take part in field work at other sites. But there is no substitute, both academically and spiritually, for working at our college’s excavation. David Ilan is a master teacher and mentor. He has even trained some of our students for staff positions and has inspired several to continue archaeological research and field work. A number have already published excavated finds.

This coming summer (2014) we will once again offer this program to a group of eager graduate students. However, they will not have the opportunity to work at Tel Dan. We are in desperate need of new funds. I beseech our supporters to follow in the legacy of Richard Scheuer, whose generosity allowed HUC to continue its active involvement in the field of archaeology in the Land of the Bible – Israel.

Accolades for Alumni
Dr. Angela Roskop Erisman received the Manfred Lautenschläger Award for Theological Promise for her book *The Wilderness Itineraries: Genre, Geography, and the Growth of Torah.* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2011).

Articles and Books by Alumni


Alumni Notice

We need your support!

Alumni support is vital for student scholarships. Our goal is to accept more qualified students to the School of Graduate Studies, but without generous alumni support admission remains limited. As you know, we no longer ask for annual dues. Please consider a gift specifically designated to the SGS Scholarship Fund. You can donate by mail or online: donate.huc.edu/CNgrad.

For more information, contact Shelly Goldfarb, Graduate School Administrative Assistant, at 513.487.3230 or sgoldfarb@huc.edu.
Samuel Greengus
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year part-time rabbinical program for students pursuing undergraduate degrees at the University of Cincinnati. I was asked to teach a required course in each of the rabbinical programs. (I taught Hebrew grammar, readings in various Hebrew texts, Aramaic and commentaries.) But I was able to offer additional courses as “electives” aimed at graduate or rabbinical students; this brought my course load up to six courses over the year. This was a lot, but I was young and energetic. The second hurdle was the untimely passing, in June 1963, of Julius Lewy, a world-renowned scholar, who taught Bible and Semitic languages, along with guiding the dissertations of a significant number of students in the graduate school. His death was a great blow and created a major gap in the academic programs.

Fortunately, Isaac Jerusalmi, who was hired with me in 1963, was able to take over Julius Lewy’s classes in Syriac, as well as teaching other courses dealing with Hebrew and Aramaic. But Lewy also taught many classes in Akkadian. President Glueck turned to Hildegard Lewy and asked her to take over some of her husband’s courses and doctoral students. Mrs. Lewy was herself a noted scholar, having published many important articles and delivered numerous papers, but she had always acted as a private scholar and had never previously taught classes at the College-Institute nor at the other universities where Julius taught. She was great, and more than blossomed in her new role. Students enjoyed her as professor and mentor, and for me, it was wonderful to have Dr. H. Lewy as my senior colleague and friend. Dr. Lewy generously shared books from the massive Lewy library (all later donated to the Klau Library after her death) and invited me to become second reader on Lewy Ph.D. dissertations in progress. These graduate students were quite learned and I enjoyed having the opportunity to work with them. This experience was very valuable for me and gave me a number of years during which to develop my own skills as a young professor. She introduced our first courses in ancient Near Eastern history and encouraged me to offer electives in the area, along with courses in Akkadian and Sumerian. She was instrumental in having the College-Institute invite David Weisberg to join the Cincinnati faculty in 1967, only some months before her own death that same year. He, of course, went on to become an important and valued professor, both in the rabbinical and graduate schools.

Looking back, we need to remember how much both Hildegard and Julius Lewy, who had come to the United States as refugees from Nazi Germany, loved the College-Institute and helped build the School of Graduate Studies. They donated their library and bequeathed the bulk of their estate to establish graduate fellowships. They taught generations of students and future scholars, and did everything in their power to secure the continued teaching and study of ancient Near Eastern languages and civilizations as part of biblical studies within HUC-JIR.

Please help us keep the alumni directory up-to-date. Send your current mailing address and email to Shelly Goldfarb at sgoldfarb@huc.edu.
“There are things whose fruits a man enjoys in this world while the crown is laid up for him in the world to come: honoring father and mother, deeds of loving-kindness, making peace between a man and his fellow; and the study of Torah is equal to them all.”
M. Peah 1:1

Annual Alumni Luncheon
It is this passion for study and the belief in its significance that characterizes the lives and careers of the alumni of the School of Graduate Studies. Nowhere is this more evident than at the Annual Alumni Association Luncheon at the Society of Biblical Literature and American Academy of Religion meetings.

SGS Director Dr. Nili Fox provided some encouraging updates on enrollment, job placement and scholarships for the present student body. On the tables were copies of a letter from the president of the Alumni Association, Dr. Jeffrey Cooley, reminding alumni of the need for scholarship funds for graduate students. Dr. David Aaron was introduced as the newly-appointed Director of Scholarly Publications and Rabbi Rachel Sabath Beit-Halachmi as Director of Admissions.

The major event of the luncheon was the presentation of a festschrift to Dr. Samuel Greengus, as mentioned in the Director’s Report. Dr. Greengus had been a dissertation advisor of all of the editors and contributors. His gracious and generous response reminded all in the room of why he had had such an impact on his students and the College-Institute.

Concluding the event was the introduction of Dr. Aaron Panken, the new President of HUC-JIR. For those gathered there, it was a joy to recognize him as a participating member of the Society of Biblical Literature. The alumni look forward to this new phase in the school’s history under his leadership.

Mentorship Program
Dr. Jeffrey Cooley focused his remarks upon the introduction of a mentorship program. This has been an initiative of the SGS and the Alumni Association, enhanced by the discussion of the Wabash initiative on teaching.

The SGS Alumni Association is currently seeking alumni mentors who are actively engaged with and primarily employed in the academy. Volunteers should have at least two years of higher-education teaching experience and be willing to:

- Offer support on navigating the graduate program and advice for its successful completion.
- Provide counsel on navigating the academy as a graduate student, including professional society participation and adjunct teaching.
- Give insight on the job application process; this could include providing feedback on cover letters, curricula vitae, etc., as well as the marketability of research topics.
- Serve as a sounding-board for research, which might entail the discussion of ideas, or even providing feedback on short manuscripts.
- Advise on pedagogy, including syllabus design and classroom instruction.
- Assist in the cultivation of professional contacts.

In the competitive environment of higher education at present, such support is necessary to assure that students will continue to see the SGS as a viable option for launching a career in academia. Our hope is to begin a pilot program this fall with a limited number of students and mentors. Based upon their experiences we plan to develop the program to serve all of the students who would be interested in this kind of support and experience. If you are willing to serve the SGS in this manner, please contact Shelly Goldfarb at sgoldfarb@huc.edu indicating your interest in this program.

Graduate Student Workshop
Each year the Alumni Association plans a workshop for graduate students on some topic that, in consultation with the Graduate Student Association, is deemed to be of value for their career. The workshop this year, presented by John Kampen, will focus on academic conference presentations and publication. It will be held on March 5 at 12:40 p.m. in the Pines conference room in the Sisterhood Dorm on the Cincinnati campus.
My name is Guy Ridge. I am a second year Ph.D. student studying Hebrew Bible and the ancient Near East at Hebrew Union College – Jewish Institute of Religion on the Cincinnati campus. I am currently the Vice President of the Graduate Student Association (GSA). As we begin the spring semester of the 2013–2014 academic year, I am pleased to share with you some of the more noteworthy aspects of the upcoming months.

For the past several years, the Cincinnati campus has utilized technology to live stream classes from our New York and Los Angeles campuses. This has expanded the list of available classes for both graduate and rabbinical students at HUC Cincinnati. For example, this semester several of us in Cincinnati are taking a course on the Book of Leviticus taught by Dr. S. David Sperling from our New York campus. Dr. Sperling is a highly respected scholar of the Hebrew Bible and Semitic languages. We are thrilled to have the opportunity to study with him and greatly appreciate the administration’s efforts to maximize the utilization of the many impressive resources (both human and technological) maintained at HUC.

The GSA has been working in association with the faculty to develop more opportunities for students to present scholarly papers at regional and national conferences. Several graduate students have had papers accepted already to regional conferences, and several more are submitting papers to the upcoming 2014 Society of Biblical Literature’s national meeting. Furthermore, students are hoping to introduce a new student-led symposium at HUC Cincinnati that will give individuals the opportunity to practice delivering their papers before a scholarly audience prior to their official presentations at conferences.

Finally, students and faculty from HUC Cincinnati will be headed to Israel this summer for the 2014 Summer-in-Israel program. This program will take place from May 31 to July 8, and will include several weeks of instruction and touring throughout Jerusalem, followed by two weeks participating in an active archaeological excavation at Abel Beth Maacah in the Upper Galilee. We are extremely grateful.