

# The NEWSLETTER of the FERN & MANFRED STEINFELD Program in Judaic Studies

THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE



Dear Friends of Judaic Studies,



**H**appy  
15<sup>th</sup>  
anniversary  
to the Fern  
and Manfred  
Steinfeld  
Program  
in Judaic  
Studies at the  
University of  
Tennessee in

Knoxville. How time flies when we are having fun!

And fun we have had, for the past fifteen years, and especially this past year. As I have said before, every year gets better in some way than the one before. You will see what I mean when you read all of the great activities and honors of our participating faculty. Together we create quite a tapestry! Faculty are productive in their scholarship and successful in the classroom and in demand as public speakers and, as you will see in the newsletter, it doesn't have to be all drab and dreary, but can be a lot of fun. This past summer, the faculty in Religious Studies, as well as the members of the Judaic Studies Advisory Committee, traveled to far off places for their work, among them Turkey, Africa, and China.

We are most pleased to welcome two new members to the Department of Religious Studies. Aphra, daughter of Dr. Johanna Stiebert and Dr. David Tandy has joined our ranks. Congratulations to Johanna and David and of course to Gustav. Our other new addition is Dr. Rivka Ribak, who has joined us as the Schusterman Visiting Israel Professor for the year. Rivka teaches Communications at Haifa University. She is accompanied by her husband Yair Gil, and their daughters

Shira, Tamar, and Michal. We hope that the year here will be a good one for all of you.

The news this past year was somewhat mixed for the Department of Religious Studies, as we were informed by the college that our graduate program did not produce enough M.A.s to justify the cost in funds and personnel. We are allowed to phase out our current students, but as of the end of this academic year, Religious Studies will no longer offer a Master's degree through the Philosophy Department. Faculty will continue to serve on M.A. and Ph.D. committees in other departments. On the flip side, the Religious Studies faculty initiated an Honors major in addition to our regular major in Religious Studies, effective fall 2009. An honors track in the undergraduate degree will be less demanding of our faculty's time, but still allow our faculty to work with bright and eager students. We are also contributing a new introductory course, RS 107, to the Chancellor's Honors Program.

As we go into this new year, the Department of Religious Studies is experiencing the same budget cuts and restrictions as other departments in the college, and we hope for our sake and that of the students who will graduate and look for a job that the economic downturn will be of short duration, so that we can go forward with our lives and our agendas.

We are saddened by the recent death of Frederick Stanley Lusby, "Stan," as he was popularly known, who joined the Department of Religious Studies in 1970 and served as its Head for eight years. Stan was many things to many people, but his greatest fame far and near was as a master teacher, who cared for his

students. The department is planning to set up a lecture series in the History of Religions to honor Stan's memory and the great impact he had on those whom he encountered. Any contributions may be made to the Department of Religious Studies, Stan Lusby Memorial, and sent to the department at the address on this newsletter.

In my seventh year as Head of the Department of Religious Studies, I participate in the life of the university in many different ways, by attending monthly Heads' meetings and Heads' lunches, and lunches for women administrators. There are Heads' retreats, and campus retreats, and Leadership Institutes, at the University, at the American Academy of Religion, and in the city of Knoxville. This year I have the great honor of being in the Leadership Knoxville class of 2009. I am able to contribute to the professional success of our colleagues. This past year, our colleague Mark Hulsether was promoted to full professor. Congratulations to Mark! This year Dr. Tina Shepardson is coming up for tenure, and the following year Dr. Rachele Scott. For the college, I also serve on the Space Committee and the Humanities Initiative. In the department we are actively and energetically working with the college development office to grow private giving for the Department of Religious Studies as well as the Fern and Manfred Steinfeld Program in Judaic Studies in a variety of ways. Our departmental Board of Visitors has been very helpful in identifying ways in which they can support our efforts. Areas under discussion are African American religions, Christianity, and Modern Hebrew language instruction. This past

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year we were fortunate to receive a new endowment from our friends, Karen and Pace Robinson of Knoxville, for which we are deeply grateful.

Two UT students, Amy Canter and Adam Schwartz, are currently studying in Israel, at Hebrew University in Jerusalem and Ben Gurion University in Beer Sheva. They were the fortunate recipients of our first Judaic Studies scholarships funded by the Dr. Ruben Robinson Memorial Fund. In future years, the Fern and Manfred Steinfeld Scholarship Fund in Judaic Studies will also be available.

Please check our two websites at <http://web.utk.edu/~religion> and <http://web.utk.edu/~judaic> for current programs and other activities. Our thanks to our webmaster, Jeremy Hughes, who does a fantastic job in keeping us current.

In the hope that this newsletter actually makes it to your mailbox close to Simchat Torah, I wish you a Shanah Tovah u'Metuka, a sweet and peaceful 5769.

B'Shalom,

Gilya G. Schmidt, Ph.D.  
Professor and Head  
Department of Religious Studies,  
and Chair  
The Fern and Manfred Steinfeld  
Program in Judaic Studies

The Fern and Manfred Steinfeld Program in Judaic Studies offers two scholarships:

- THE FERN AND MANFRED STEINFELD SCHOLARSHIP FUND IN JUDAIC STUDIES
- DR. RUBEN ROBINSON MEMORIAL FUND

Students interested in the criteria should check the Judaic Studies website at <http://web.utk.edu/~judaic>, or contact one of the members of the scholarship committee: Professors Gilya Schmidt, J.P. Dessel, or Marilyn Kallet.

## NEW ENDOWMENT FUND



Pace and Karen Robinson.

Our gratitude to Karen and Pace Robinson who took the lead in joining Pace's mother, Natalie Robinson, in her long-time support of Judaic Studies at UT. The Karen and Pace Robinson Enrichment Fund supports a variety of worthy student and faculty projects under the auspices of The Fern and Manfred Steinfeld Program in Judaic Studies at UT. Our thanks to Karen and Pace for their generosity!



Father and daughter: David Smith, B.A. in Religious Studies 2007, and Maggie, senior in Religious Studies.

## STUDENTS STUDY IN ISRAEL WITH SUPPORT FROM THE DR. RUBEN ROBINSON MEMORIAL FUND

Adam Schwartz, a junior in Psychology, and Amy Canter, a junior in Religious Studies, are currently studying in Israel. Each received a \$1,000 scholarship to help defray the costs for their overseas studies.

Adam, from Chattanooga, TN, has been active in the Jewish Student Organization/Hillel and seeks to further his Hebrew language skills while studying in Israel.

Amy, from Seymour, Tennessee, has also been active in the Jewish Student Organization/Hillel. In addition to the academic subjects she is studying, she is also hoping to improve her Hebrew.

Congratulations to Adam and to Amy for receiving this honor.

# SCHUSTERMAN VISITING ISRAEL PROFESSOR DR. RIVKA RIBAK



Dr. Rivka Ribak.

For the past three years, I had the dream of attracting a Schusterman Fellow to the University of Tennessee. We were successful on our second try, and

very happy of it. The organization that made this dream a reality is the American-Israeli Cooperative Enterprise, a non-profit organization (503) (c), established in 1993, whose aim it is to provide American students with a broad understanding of Israel's history, society, politics, culture and relations with her neighbors and the broader international community.

This year, the University of Tennessee was chosen along with Stanford, Maryland, Florida, George Washington University, Arizona, Rutgers, Syracuse and Harvard. AICE partners with the institution and the community, providing 50% of the funds while the university and the community each contribute 25%. I would like to express our gratitude to the following sponsors:

- College of Arts and Sciences, Dean Bruce E. Bursten
- Jeff and Nancy Becker
- Bernie and Barbara Bernstein
- Bruce E. Bursten
- Arnold and Susan Cohen
- Guilford and Diane Glazer
- Mitchell and Margie Goldman
- Richard and Jacki Imbrey
- Herb and Elise Jacobs
- Larry and Kay Leibowitz
- Alexandra Rosen
- Stephen and Kim Rosen
- Alan Solomon and Andrea Cartwright
- Gilya G. Schmidt
- Knoxville Jewish Alliance
- Temple Beth El.

Upon Dr. Ribak's arrival, a press release was issued by the university:

"Rivka Ribak, senior lecturer in the Department of Communication at the University of Haifa, will teach and lecture at UT and in the Jewish community and act as a liaison between several constituencies on and off campus. The American-Israeli Cooperative Enterprise -- with support of the Charles and Lynn Schusterman Family Foundation -- selects 20 American universities each year to receive grants to appoint a visitor.

"Dr. Ribak earned her doctorate in communication from the University of California at San Diego and has published numerous papers since then. Recently Ribak and her colleague, Michele Rosenthal, received a three year grant from the Israel Science Foundation to study 'Unplugged: case studies in media avoidance.' Her work explores how different groups resist or renegotiate their uses of new and old communication technologies.

"She will teach two classes each semester. 'Israeli Filmmakers: Cinema and Society' explores contemporary Israeli cinema, and 'Israeli Media Scholarship: Cultural Approaches' focuses on identities and processes in Israeli society as they are constructed in and through the media....

"We are thrilled to have Dr. Ribak with us in this capacity. Her classes are full, so students are definitely able to benefit from her presence on campus. Her colleagues in the Department of Religious Studies are excited about the opportunity to exchange ideas with her, and the Jewish community is very happy to embrace her and her family while they are in Knoxville," said Gilya Schmidt, professor and department head.

"We are grateful to the College of Arts and Sciences, our community donors and the American-Israeli Cooperative Enterprise for making this special educational venture possible," she said."

We asked Dr. Ribak for a few words as well. Here is what she wrote: "Knoxville, TN is not the first place

Israelis think about when considering a sabbatical in the US, but I was seeking -- and I found -- something different from what I was used to. Having lived in Israel for most of my life and having spent extended periods of time on the east and the west coasts, I find Knoxville to be both welcoming and challenging in ways I could only hope for. The community, both on and off campus, is extremely helpful and supportive; and for a communication scholar, working in the Department of Religious Studies provides a unique perspective on theories and practices that are otherwise taken for granted. In addition, for the scholar interested in cross-cultural relationships, classes offer an exceptional resource: Each week I am discussing communication and culture in Israel with some 50-60 interested and insightful students (most of whom have never been to Israel), and as they learn about the subject matter, I learn about American culture. In conclusion, then, I would like to use this opportunity to thank the Schusterman Foundation, the Fern and Manfred Steinfeld Program in Judaic Studies, the Department of Religious Studies, the College of Arts and Sciences at the University of Tennessee, the Knoxville Jewish Alliance, and the donors in the Jewish community."

We are very happy that Rivka and her family chose to come to Knoxville for a year. By now, the family has already settled into a routine of school and work, and Rivka is very much in demand as a speaker in the Jewish and academic community.



Gilya Schmidt in courtyard of Ohel Moshe synagogue in Shanghai, China.

## JUDAIC STUDIES ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Judaic Studies Advisory Committee is interdisciplinary in nature, and makes recommendations on academic matters such as curriculum and visiting speakers to the chair. Faculty are wholly paid by the participating departments which include History, English, Art, Modern Foreign Languages, Philosophy, and Religious Studies. Our thanks to these departments for sharing their faculty with Judaic Studies, and to the participating faculty for their interest and commitment to quality education in Judaic Studies.

### ● Palmira Brummett

During this past year, Professor Brummett, Distinguished Professor in the Humanities, published a number of articles.

- " 'Turks' and 'Christians': The Iconography of Possession in the Depiction of the Ottoman-Venetian-Hapsburg Frontiers, 1550-1689," pp. 110-139, in Matthew Dimmock and Andrew Hadfield, eds., *The Religions of the Book: Coexistence and Conflict, 1400-1660* (Houndsmills: Palgrave Macmillan), 2008.
- "Imagining the Early Modern Ottoman Space from Piri Reis to World History," in Virginia Aksan and Daniel Goffman, eds. *The Early Modern Ottomans: Remapping the Empire*, Cambridge U. Press, 2007, 15-58.
- "Gender and Empire in Late Ottoman Istanbul: Caricature, Models of Empire, and the Case for Ottoman Exceptionalism," *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East*, v. 27, no. 2 (2007): 281-300.

### ● Heather Hirschfeld

My work on Renaissance drama and the English Reformation continues to bear various kinds of fruit – this year, in particular, in the form of speaking "gigs." In addition to talks at Shakespeare Association and Renaissance Society conferences, I delivered invited lectures at Penn State University in November of 2007 and to the Columbia University Early Modern Seminar in April 2008. An article on women and revenge tragedy appeared

in a 2007 collection, *The Impact of Feminism on English Renaissance Literature* (Palgrave), and several solicited essays -- on early modern authorship, on Marlowe's *Dr. Faustus*, and on Thomas Kyd's *The Spanish Tragedy* -- are forthcoming in late 2008 and 2009. I was the beneficiary of a Hodges zero-teaching semester in the spring, and made good on it by extending my research back into the medieval drama that gave life and form to the stage Shakespeare would inherit. I was delighted to receive a College of Arts and Sciences Junior Teaching Award in the Fall.

### ● Marilyn Kallet

My big news is that I have a volume of collected poems coming out, gathering 40 years of poetry-writing and adding about 50 new poems to the mix. The volume is called, *Packing Light: New and Selected Poems*, and it will be published by Black Widow Press in Boston, January, 2009. The Hodges Fund and the University of Tennessee Humanities Initiative have helped to support production of the new collection. I have started a blog about poetry and the writing life, on a fantastic author's site called Red Room. My blog is <http://www.redroom.com/author/marilyn-kallet>. I hope you will look me up there and respond to any topics that may interest you. The poems in *Packing Light* are largely but not exclusively focused on Jewish identity, and contain some of the writing I completed on Holocaust research in Horb, Germany, in Poland and in Riga, Latvia. Among the new poems readers will find oral histories about the Jews in central France, where I had a writing residency for a month in July, 2007 (in Auvillar). The villagers told me stories about Resistance and collaboration. There was one Jewish family in town, the Hirsches. The father was a radiologist. Dr. Hirsch was denounced and taken to work with Mengele on his experiments. He testified against Mengele at Nuremberg. The wife was denounced and sent to Auschwitz. But the children, a boy and a girl, were hidden by one of the village families. More of my poetry on France and the Holocaust can be found at <http://www.new-works.org/index.tehm.10.3>. This issue of New Works Review was edited by Charles Fishman, who will be a visiting poet at UT in October, 2008. In addition to other literary magazine publications,

four of my poems appeared in *Blood to Remember: American Poets on the Holocaust*, edited by Fishman. In 2008, I gave lots of readings, both of poetry and of *Jack the Healing Cat*, my children's book, co-sponsored by the UT College of Veterinary Medicine's HABIT Program. I read for the Young-Williams Animal Shelter "Furry Fall Festival." And I had the great pleasure of reading from, *The Movable Nest: A Mother/Daughter Companion*, at the Cornelia Street Cafe in Greenwich Village--on Mother's Day. My daughter Heather Gross was there (her first trip to New York), I'm delighted to say. The Young Writers' Institute, of which I am director, celebrated its 15 year, with wonderful free workshops offered in every genre to our teen friends and their high school teachers. Leslie Snow taught the journalism course, Kali Meister taught playwriting, rock star Keith Wallen of Copper offered the songwriting workshop. Despite the snow, we had a great turnout and a terrific event. In 2008-2009 I hold a Lindsay Young Professorship again, an honor that I have enjoyed for three years.

### Madame Assen Remembers the G.I.s

"We were all saying Mass  
on the day of Liberation,  
when the jeeps rolled into town!"  
"We spilled out, cheering!"  
Madame stands, radiant.  
The wrinkles fall from her face.  
"One of the soldiers  
offered me a ride on his jeep.  
For me, it was Christmas!"  
"He had short red hair.  
I think his name was Eric.  
He gave me his dog tags."  
"I had to give them back when he left.  
I cried."  
We are all crying now,  
loving the American G.I.'s,  
the good war.  
Madame cracks the spell,  
"The Germans were nice to us children, too.  
They played with us. We became friends."  
"There was a difference between  
ordinary German soldiers  
and the brass."  
Her husband nods.  
But I am thinking of the Jewish  
children,  
the ones who had no time  
to make friends.

-Marilyn Kallet



Marilyn Kallet (center) and friends during "Furry Fall Festival" at the Young-William Animal Shelter, where she read *Jack The Healing Cat* in October 2007.

### ● Vejas Liulevicius

In the last year, Dr. Vejas Gabriel Liulevicius became the new director of the University of Tennessee's Center for the Study of War and Society in January 2008. He was also elected president-elect of the Association for the Advancement of Baltic Studies, and spoke at that scholarly organization's conference at Indiana University. In March 2008, he was an invited speaker at the University of Missouri Kansas City and at the National Memorial World War I Museum in Kansas City. He published an article, "German Military Occupation and Culture on the Eastern Front in World War I", in *The Germans and the East*, ed. Charles Ingrao, et al. (Purdue University Press, 2008). The Teaching Company of Chantilly, Virginia, which produces taped "Great Courses" in audio and DVD formats, released his 36-lecture course entitled "War, Peace, and Power: Diplomatic History of Europe, 1500-2000" (for more information, see [www.teach12.com](http://www.teach12.com)). In 2008, two of his Ph.D. students won prestigious dissertation research fellowships for work in archives in Europe: Tracey Hayes was awarded a Fulbright and Jake Hamric was awarded a DAAD (German Academic Exchange Service) fellowship.

### ● Daniel Magilow

This past year much of Daniel H. Magilow's work focused on publishing and publicizing a unique family photo album from the archives of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. The edited translation, *In Her Father's Eyes: A Childhood Extinguished by the Holocaust* (Rutgers University Press, 2008) shows what the Holocaust took away through the story of a young girl named Kitty Weichherz. Kitty Weichherz's uncanny affinities to Anne Frank make her easily recognizable to students and Holocaust Studies

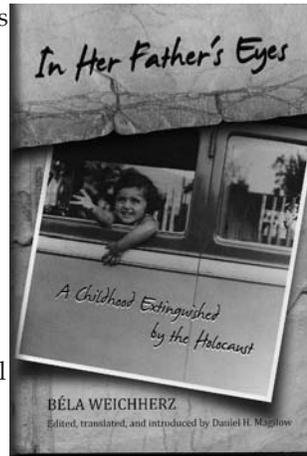
professionals alike. Dr. Magilow lectured about this project as the 2008 Holocaust Studies Scholar-in-Residence at Florida International University in Miami. He also

curated the related traveling exhibition "*In Her Father's Eyes: A Slovak Childhood in the Shadow of the Holocaust*" that tells Kitty Weichherz's story. The exhibition opened at the Embassy of the Slovak Republic in Washington, D.C. this past June. It will travel to the first floor of Hodges Library and be on display from October 6, 2008 to December 2, 2008.

Aside from this project, Dr. Magilow also presented numerous papers at professional conferences, including the international conferences of the German Studies Association and the Association for Jewish Studies. He has also served as the book review editor of *The Journal of Jewish Identities*, a new interdisciplinary journal dedicated to the diverse manifestations and dimensions of "Jewishness."

### ● Amy Neff

This past year I have continued my research and writing on a beautifully illuminated 13<sup>th</sup>-century manuscript, the *Supplicationes variae* in Florence. As always, research leads to interesting tangents, and one of these has resulted in an essay that will be published later this year in a Festschrift offered to Thomas F. Mathews. The essay, titled "This Unnatural Flow: Bleeding demons in the *Supplicationes variae*, the Arena Chapel, and Notre-Dame des Fontaines, La Brigue," is co-authored with Professor Anne Derbes of Hood College. It examines a strange motif – devils that bleed – in the context of misogynistic and anti-Semitic beliefs current in the later middle ages. I've also presented papers at two conferences, the Medieval Symposium at the University of the South, Sewanee, and the International Medieval Congress at Kalamazoo, MI. Looking forward to the coming year, I'm grateful for the opportunities afforded by a Lindsay Young Professorship for 2008-2009 and



am honored by an invitation to speak on Franciscan art and iconography at Princeton University this spring.

### ● Charles H. Reynolds

Without Charlie Reynolds there would be no endowments for Judaic Studies at UT and no Judaic Studies Program. Long before Gilya Schmidt and J.P. Dessel were hired, then Dean Larry Ratner and Charlie Reynolds worked hard to secure funding for Schmidt's position, and credit for the existence of the Judaic Studies Program and its success in the past fifteen years goes as much to Charlie as to anyone else. Looking towards retirement later this year, Charlie mused already a year ago about his fondest memories of his long and colorful career at UT. "As I near retirement and contemplate my own career at UT, two of my fondest memories are the on-going success of Judaic Studies and the *Journal of Religious Ethics*. This journal, which we started at UT in 1973 with support from local Knoxville citizens, is now without question the leading international journal in its field. It is published at Florida State and is governed and managed by a distinguished national and international Board of Directors and Trustees and has its own endowed funds. I mention the *JRE* along with Judaic Studies because both of these projects have one important factor in common: neither would have been possible without private gifts. More and more we are in a situation where significant new projects and directions in higher education – in both public and private institutions – require private funds from individuals and foundations to be launched and to continue to develop with success. I am confident our near and distant friends of Judaic Studies at UT will continue to respond to the ongoing needs and opportunities of this important program." Professor Reynolds is the primary author of an essay on Professor David Dungan's academic career and contributions to scholarship, to be included in a Festschrift that will be presented to him at the Society for Biblical Literature (SBL) this year.

### ● Tina Shepardson

Dr. Shepardson continues to enjoy researching, publishing, and teaching on Christian/Jewish relations in the Roman world and the history of Christian anti-Jewish language. She is happy about the publication of her first book, on

the anti-Jewish language of Ephrem, a fourth-century Christian leader from eastern Syria, as well as a few recent journal articles on related topics. This November she will present a paper in Boston on Jewish and Christian biblical interpretation in late ancient Mesopotamia.

This year she was very grateful to receive two awards that helped her travel to Turkey for a second time to do research for her second book project on the Roman city of Antioch (modern Antakya, Turkey). Thanks to a Franklin Research Grant from the American Philosophical Society, she was able to travel to Turkey in June, where she happened to spend a few days in Istanbul at the same time as J.P. Dessel – she was happy to see a familiar face! From Istanbul she traveled to the site of the Roman city of Edessa (modern Şanlıurfa, Turkey), where Ephrem, the subject of her first book, lived the last ten years of his life. While there, she visited Harran, and saw tourist sites in the area that were associated with Abraham and Job. After a long and very hot bus ride from Şanlıurfa, in northern Mesopotamia, across the Euphrates River, she arrived in Antakya (Antioch) and connected with an Australian scholar and another American scholar who had planned to meet her there for collaborative research on their shared interest: the fourth-century history of Antioch. The visit proved to be particularly productive, thanks to the connections that she had made on her first visit in 2006, and the advantages of being there with two other scholars in the field. Thanks to a Summer Stipend award from the National Endowment for the Humanities, she was able to devote the remainder of the summer upon her return to writing about this new research. She will present some of this research at a conference in Boston in November, and another part at a conference session that she organized in

New York in January.

This year has been a year of more travels than usual for Tina. Beginning last August with a conference in Oxford, and ending with her June trip to Turkey, in March she also traveled to Rome. Having studied and written about the Roman world for years, it was very useful and meaningful for her finally to see for the first time so many of the sites and artifacts that are relevant to her work. The visit to the early Christian section of the Vatican museum, and the trip to the ancient port city of Ostia were particularly educational and will help shape her future research and teaching.

On campus Tina continues to chair and coordinate the Faculty Research Seminar on “The Mediterranean World in Late Antiquity,” thanks to funding from the Humanities Initiative at UT. This seminar is entering its fourth year, and continues to thrive and provide top-level interdisciplinary discussion of new scholarship in the field of Late Antiquity among faculty and graduate students on campus. This year she will expand the program by organizing a two-day Southeast Regional Late Antiquity Workshop on “Roman Religion and Culture in Late Antiquity,” also thanks to funding from the Humanities Initiative. She continues to find the time that she devotes in service to this endeavor extremely rewarding.

Tina remains active around campus and the community, including volunteering her time to present several lectures each semester to the Knoxville community. She also continues to enjoy teaching, and this Fall will again offer a class on the New Testament, as well as co-teaching the large-enrollment World Religions course. She will, in addition, offer a new one-credit Honors seminar called “The Politics of Biblical Interpretation,” a class that she hopes the first-year Honors students will find both informative and interesting.

#### ● Johanna Stiebert

The academic year 2007/2008 has been another eventful one on several fronts. In terms of teaching, I offered courses in both World Religions and Intermediate Hebrew. The former entailed coordinating our large-intake Religious Studies 101, which introduced in the range of two hundred undergraduates to Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, Christianity and Islam. The latter, on the other hand, involved working with just four very highly motivated students. The Spring 2008 semester brought to an end four

consecutive semesters of Biblical Hebrew. I hope to offer a Beginners Hebrew course again in the near future and would like to see Hebrew offered regularly at UT. Next semester, however, Fall semester 2008, I will be at the University of Swansea in Wales. I have been selected as the Director of the Semester in Wales Program, which has been operating at UT for over fifteen years now. I will be accompanying a group of sixteen students from UT, as well as teaching a course on Judaism. I look forward to extended time in Europe and to renewing academic links with researchers in Great Britain.

In terms of research, I attended and presented at the regional SBL (Society of Biblical Literature) conference, held in March in Atlanta. While there I also participated in the last of several seminars on teaching religion in state universities in the south. These seminars were funded by the Wabash Institute and attended by professors from the Universities of Tennessee, Appalachia and Georgia. I am also continuing research on a book on the vocabulary and ideology of torture in the Hebrew Bible.

Outreach – a favorite part of my profession – has this year included four very enjoyable study sessions on the book of Job at Heska Amuna Synagogue. Together with Rabbi Zivic and a vibrant and stimulating group, I explored this difficult text and found yet more reasons to be puzzled at Job and Job’s God.

On the home front there has been a big change: on 22 June 2008 our daughter, Aphra Jane Haviland Tandy was born. She is the sister of our two-and-a-half-year-old son, Gustav and a very bonny baby. “Aphra” is Hebrew. It can pertain either to a place name, or it can mean, “to dust.” She is named after the acclaimed seventeenth century writer and adventuress Aphra Behn, said to be the first English woman to earn a living by writing. Both Aphra and Gustav will be traveling to Wales with me.



Tina Shepardson at the Roman Museum.



Aphra Jane Haviland Tandy.

## J.P. DESSEL ACTIVITIES

### MANFRED AND FERN STEINFELD PROFESSOR OF ANCIENT JEWISH HISTORY

#### Research

This past season at Tell Tayinat was a resounding success! Tell Tayinat (ancient Kunulua, capital of the Neo-Hittite kingdom Patina/Unqi) is located in the 'Amuq Plain of the Hatay Province of Turkey, due west from the modern city of Antakya (ancient Antioch). This year I was accompanied by a friend and co-worker, Kim Harrison, the administrative specialist in the History Department who was in charge of data entry and bookkeeping. It was great to have Kim on board! This summer our living arrangements were different and we set up camp in a state-run boarding school in the town of Reyhanli on the Turkish-Syrian border. The campus and facilities were very nice and the women's rooms even had air conditioning. But we lost our cook (the most important part of the team) in the shuffle and although our new cook tried hard, he sometimes fell short of the mark (for instance the day we had pasta and fried bread). However, the archaeological results were stellar so the change in camp life was well worth it.

We found significant Iron Age IIB/C remains (roughly from the 9<sup>th</sup> c. – 7<sup>th</sup> c. BCE) in two fields and continued work in the EBA stratum (third millennium BCE) in another field. We opened up a new area, Field 5, east of the already established fields 1 and 2. We laid out Field 5 to straddle a relatively flat area on the eastern part of the tell as well as the slope. We knew the Oriental Institute had never excavated this part of the site, so there was no chance it had been pitted or trenched in the 1930's. The intent of this field was to catch some well preserved Iron Age II remains that have so far eluded us. We also wanted to begin a step trench down the tell's eastern face in order to catch the entire stratigraphic sequence of the site. By excavating on the slope an archaeologist hopes to catch earlier strata (architectural levels) as they extend out from the lower portions of the tell. In this way, in the future we hope to pick up some of the earliest Early Bronze Age levels of the site. However, in the first season in Field 5 we concentrated our efforts on the topmost, level part of the field. Our hunches were rewarded when within 30 cms. of the surface of the site we came across the first traces of mudbrick walls. Mudbrick is very tricky stuff to excavate,

at least at Tell Tayinat. Firstly, I should note that most all of the architecture on the site is made from mudbricks, there is very little use of stone. At Tayinat, the mudbricks are sun-dried but not baked which means that over time the mudbricks deteriorate into the existing debris and soils making it difficult to pick it out millennia later. However, we were aided by the fact that many of the walls were plastered, meaning that we soon found thin white lines indicating the exterior faces of the walls. Once we identified the walls, we then began to excavate down to their surfaces. Much to our surprise many of these walls were preserved to a height of well over a meter and a half. When all was said and done, we found a large multi-room building about 17 meters in length and at least 9 meters wide. We had hoped that some traces of decoration would be found on the white plastered walls (such decoration was found by the Chicago team in an Assyrian Palace dating to the 7<sup>th</sup> c. BCE). We had also hoped to find well preserved material deposits on the surfaces. We did find several ceramic installations made from relatively intact pots, as well as a few smashed pots. We also found some finely carved bone tools and part of a beautifully made stone bowl with stone inlay. However, most of the rooms in the building were relatively empty, as if the building was purposefully cleaned out before it was abandoned. Unfortunately, because the Iron Age ceramic sequence from Tayinat and the 'Amuq Plain is not well known we are still unsure of the date of this building, but provisionally we date it to the 8<sup>th</sup> c. BCE.

In Field 2 the results of the excavation were even more exciting. In the 1930's the Chicago team had already excavated a 9<sup>th</sup> c. BCE temple. That temple is a small tripartite temple that seems to follow in form and style the Solomonic Temple described in I Kings 6-8. In fact over the years the Tayinat temple became the archaeological "stand-in" for the Solomonic Temple of which there are no archaeological remains (another temple from the site of 'Ain Dara discovered in the 1970's is probably an even closer parallel to the Solomonic Temple). The Tayinat Temple had double lion column bases in its front entrance or portico (the Biblical ulam and the two pillars would be boaz and jachin), a central main hall (the hekhal) and a back inner sanctuary (the

debir) with an altar.



J.P. Dessel sitting on the steps of the newly found Iron Age temple at Tell Tayinat, note the column base to the left.

We began to excavate an area about seven meters to the northeast of the front of the Chicago temple. At first we found a pit that bottomed out with a concrete slab – it had been dug in the 1950's or 1960's when the government had erected power pylons through the Hatay. That was disappointing. Then we found another long trench – excavated by the Chicago team in the 1930's. We figured the area was pretty chewed up. But then the top of a large basalt column base began to poke out of the dirt and it soon became clear we had another monumental building. The Neo-Hittite or Luwian city states found in southeastern Turkey and northern Syria are famous for their palaces (called Bit Hilani building) and temples which almost always have huge basalt column bases supporting a front portico. The new building at Tayinat had a column base sitting on a floor made from fired mudbricks that were reached by four well cut steps. To the left of the column base was part of a basalt statue. The temple itself appears to be a tripartite one but we have yet to excavate the northern or eastern extent of the building. In fact there should be a second column base just to the east of where we stopped excavating. Several well preserved wood beams were found running across the entrance, and some metal slag was found inside the Temple but there was little else. Again, it appears as though the building was deliberately emptied before it was abandoned. Sadly, we have no idea to whom the temple was dedicated. But we are very eager to get back into the field and learn more about this new temple at Tell Tayinat.



Tina Shepardson and J.P. Dessel at the Blue Mosque in Istanbul.

### Teaching and University Service

This past fall semester I taught my survey of World History, Part I, and a graduate seminar on the rise of complex society. It is always interesting and fun to teach on both ends of the spectrum, from a huge survey class to a small graduate seminar. In the spring semester I taught my course on Mesopotamian History and Archaeology as well as the first part of Jewish History. I chaired a search for a position in Asian History. The search went very well and I learned an incredible amount about the other, eastern, end of Asia. We hired a wonderful historian of Japan, Laura Nenzi, and the Department of History will now have two people who work in Japan. I also participated on four graduate oral examinations in World History.

### Service to the Profession

I continued to serve as the treasurer of the Albright Institute of Archaeological Research (AIAR) located in Jerusalem. The large scale renovation project I mentioned last year has finally gotten underway. It has begun with turning the old garage into modern offices with some lab space as well. Not unlike the renovation of Glocker on campus, everything but the façade of the garage was demolished and replaced. In the basement of the main building that includes the hostel, office space and library, an old subterranean cistern was transformed from an archaeology lab into an extension of the library.

### Service to the Community

I continued to serve as the faculty advisor to UT Hillel. In the fall I gave a lecture for the East Tennessee Chapter of the American Institute of Archaeology on the work at Tell Tayinat where I am currently excavating.

## JUDAIC STUDIES LECTURE SERIES

We are fortunate to have two different lecture funds at our disposal. The Judaic Studies Lecture Series is supported with an annual allocation from the Knoxville Jewish Alliance ([www.jewishknoxville.org](http://www.jewishknoxville.org)). The Rebecca Solomon and Ida Schwartz Distinguished Lecture Fund for Judaic Studies supports a major lecture every other year and cosponsors some of the regular lectures as well. This past year we were again fortunate to have an excellent lineup.

In fall, we had as our honored guest our very own Head Coach of the UT Men's Basketball Team, Bruce Pearl. On October 30, Coach Pearl regaled an eager audience with stories of growing up Jewish and taking his players to Europe where they visited a concentration camp. It was a powerful experience for all. Coach Pearl's lecture was cosponsored by the Departments of Religious Studies and History, the Knoxville Jewish Alliance, and the Abraham and Rebecca Solomon and Ida Schwartz Distinguished Lecture Fund for Judaic Studies.



Coach Bruce Pearl and Gilya Schmidt.

The students who listened to Coach Pearl were very impressed with what they heard. The student comments below were representative of the class's reaction.

"The presentation by Bruce Pearl was incredibly enlightening....As a boy, Coach Pearl was an 'athlete,'

which was not something that people expected of Jews. Because he was Jewish, he said that he was involved in many fights throughout his school experience, primarily because the other children didn't accept someone who was different. Still, Bruce did not renounce his beliefs. In one example of this, he said that he would often draw the Star of David on his chest when the Catholic children would cross themselves. The strength of his character really came out when he discussed how his childhood helped him with his team today. He said that he will never let his team use the color of their skin or their religion as an excuse for their failure.

"Later, Coach Pearl spoke of how much the world has changed, even allowing a Jewish man to be head coach of a college basketball team in the Bible Belt. He said that he loved Knoxville because many people have welcomed him and his family with open arms, including many of those from other faiths...."

"During the previous summer, Coach Pearl took his team to Europe to play against foreign teams, but also to see some remains of the Holocaust. As they traveled, Coach Pearl said that he was surprised at how little his team knew about the sufferings of the Jewish people during the 1930s and 1940s.... As they moved from place to place, he said that he could see in their hearts a deep reverence for the people that had suffered and died in these locations...."

On February 8, 2008, Professor Andrea Berlin, the Morse-Alumni Distinguished Teaching Professor of Archaeology, University of Minnesota, visited campus to give a fascinating lecture entitled "New Light on the Period of the Maccabees: Excavations at Tell Kedesh." Her lecture and slide presentation, which focused on the archaeological site at Tell Kedesh in northern Israel and its history, held the attention of all present. Dr. Berlin's



Dr. Andrea Berlin (left) at the site of Tell Dan in Israel.

### In Closing...

Again I want to thank my colleagues and friends at the University and especially the Department of History for their support. I hope every one has a sweet and healthy new year....Shannah Tovah!

## GILYA G. SCHMIDT ACTIVITIES

lecture was cosponsored by the Departments of Religious Studies, History and Classics, the Marco Institute for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, the Abraham and Rebecca Solomon and Ida Schwartz Distinguished Lecture Fund for Judaic Studies, and the Knoxville Jewish Alliance.

As has been the custom for the past number of years, we again had with us an Israeli scholar, Dr. Paul Rivlin, who came to us courtesy of Emory University. Dr. Rivlin is a Senior Research Fellow at the Moshe Dayan Center for Middle Eastern and African Studies, Tel Aviv University. On February 18, 2008, Dr. Rivlin delivered the 2007 Robinson Family Lecture on Modern Israel, entitled, "U.S. Oil Consumption and the Middle East: What's the Problem?" We all have an interest and curiosity in understanding the complicated situation of oil in the Middle East. Dr. Rivlin did an excellent job explaining our dilemma. This event was cosponsored by the Departments of Religious Studies and History, the Abraham and Rebecca Solomon and Ida Schwartz Distinguished Lecture Fund, the University of Tennessee; the Knoxville Jewish Alliance, and the Emory Institute for the Study of Modern Israel.



Dr. Bill Berez guest teaching in RS 386, "Voices of the Holocaust," Spring 2008.



Mrs. Trudy Dreyer visiting RS 386, "Voices of the Holocaust," Spring 2008.

Academic life this past year was exciting and fulfilling, with teaching, speaking, research and writing. While most of the work took place in Knoxville, I also had two unusual opportunities for travel, to Cuba in December 2007 and again to China in July 2008.

In September 2007, several colleagues from Religious Studies and I participated in the Marco Semester through the "Sacred Beauty" exhibition at the McClung Museum. Many of you saw the exhibition and enjoyed its organization as well as the many lovely artifacts on display. The catalogue was a work of art itself, and I was very honored to be part of this project. My thanks to Marco director Bob Bast and Jeff Chapman, McClung Museum, for this great collaboration.

### TEACHING

While I am Department Head, I continue to teach only one course per semester. While this is a cause for some concern to me, this year I am happy to say that the program has some help with the presence of Professor Ribak, who is teaching two courses a semester, so four courses for the year. Students are very enthusiastic about her offerings on contemporary Israel, as her subject matter deals with issues that are of interest and concern to students here as well.

During fall semester 2007, I taught RS 385/JS 385, "Contemporary Jewish Thinkers," with 35 students. All of our material focused on German Jews through the ages, including Glickel of Hameln, whose autobiography really resonates with the students. We spent a good part of the semester discussing chapters from the book on rural German Jews that I have been working on, introducing the students to a part of German as well as Jewish life that is not familiar to them. I also participated in the "Life of the Mind" series through a discussion of a book on the Black Death with new students at UT, and taught a section of the newly instituted Freshman Seminars, FS 129, on the Holocaust and other Genocides. These seminars, as the title says, were introduced by the Chancellor to give Freshmen a chance to meet full-time and especially senior faculty in their first semester and first

year. Art Pais, a Holocaust survivor from Poland, visited the seminar and spoke to the students. Art's presentation was riveting and horrific, and the students had many questions to ask. In spring 2008, I taught RS 386/JS 386, "Voices of the Holocaust," with 35 students. We were fortunate to have as our guest speakers Trudy Dreyer, Rabbi Louis Zivic, and Bill Berez, whose own experiences and vantage points much enriched the students' learning experience. Every spring I also contribute two lectures on Jewish artists in Berlin and on the Holocaust to German 415, a course on Berlin with a hands-on component, as students travel to Berlin in early summer. I also continue to serve on several committees for graduate students. This past year, Romana Rouskova, an M.A. student in Modern Foreign Languages who worked with Professor David Lee in the German section, wrote and defended a thesis on the German Jewish artist Max Lieberman. In spring 2008 she completed her project and her degree. Tracey Hayes, Ph.D. student in the History Department, who works with Professor Vejas Liulevicius, sat for her written and oral exams. Tracey is interested in Jewish communities in Eastern Europe during World War I. Tracey succeeded in receiving a one-year Fulbright grant for dissertation research in Poland. Congratulations to both students! We are proud of your accomplishments.

Currently I am teaching RS 381/JS 381, "Introduction to Judaism," with 35 students, and in spring 2009 I will teach RS 386/JS 386, "Voices of the Holocaust," always a popular course with students.

A highlight of my current teaching experience is the opportunity to interact with many different types of students in China. These are graduate students and teachers at Chinese universities and colleges who are either in Judaic Studies programs or in other areas such as history, ethnic studies, or international relations. The participants in my seminars at Henan University in Kaifeng study in the Institute of Jewish Studies. These students are first interested in the subject and then in improving their English. The students for the conference seminars come from

a broader area of academia and from a large region in China. Often their primary interest is to practice their English, and then the subject matter. The conference seminar in Shanghai served as the summer institute for 85 participants from primarily eastern China who wanted to learn about "Globalization, Values, and Pluralism." The 90 participants for the Holocaust Seminar in Kunming came from the entire western area of China and beyond. Although some were students of Judaism, most were not; they came from different academic areas. Both of these large conference seminars incorporated and stressed small workshops, so that students could have additional personal interaction with the faculty. Although the three educational undertakings were very rewarding experiences, they were very different. I would like to thank the various funding sources that made this educational adventure possible -- the University of Tennessee for a SARIF travel grant, the Judaic Studies Chair Endowment in Religious Studies, Diane and Guilford Glazer, Shanghai University, Henan University, the London Centre for Jewish Culture, and Yunnan University.

## The Chinese Dragon and the Lion of Judah

It seems to be somewhat faddish this year to connect with China. This no doubt has to do with the Olympics and implies that it is a trend which will pass, that our interest will move on to something else. Personally I think that our interest is here to stay, because of China's importance to the U.S. as a trade partner and because of China's open door policy. In the case of Judaism there is nothing faddish about the Chinese interest in our history, culture, and civilization. The Chinese have a genuine interest in things Jewish. While in China during the month of July 2008, I heard much about books being published in Chinese about the Jewish ability to make money. But that is only one side of the story. Chinese students are also interested in our values, our ability to sustain our national cohesion over nearly two thousand years of diaspora existence, and our coping with persecution over time. None of these interests are surprising. Family values and social ethics are ancient components of both civilizations,

national consolidation and unification are ongoing efforts in both communities, and while the Holocaust is only one horrific example of persecution in Jewish history, the Chinese, whether last year in Shanghai or this year in Kunming, are quick to parallel it to their own suffering during the siege of 1937 by Japan and the resultant Nanking massacre. Anyone with a knowledge in any aspect of Jewish civilization will find a rich field of inquiry in today's China -- not a fad, but a sincere and genuine interest in the details of our success as a people. It is therefore not surprising if I say that teaching in China during the month of July was an exciting and enriching experience.

Networking is generally a good thing. In this case, collaboration between the University of Tennessee Knoxville and Shanghai University led to an invitation for me to participate in a Holocaust Conference at Shanghai University in 2007. The contacts then established were warm and mutually beneficial and led to further invitations for this year -- to Kaifeng, to Shanghai, and to Kunming. It was not clear that the timing would work out for me to participate in all three events, but in the end that's exactly what happened -- they lined up neatly like pearls on a string, and with visa in hand after only four days turn-around time, I was all set. Let me say that each experience was distinct. They shared only my modest ability to use Chinese phrases of politeness and my need to speak a clear English in the classroom and outside.

## Kaifeng

At the Holocaust conference in Shanghai last year I met Professor Zhang Qianhong, director of the Institute of Jewish Studies at Henan University in Kaifeng and some of her teachers and graduate students. They extended a most cordial invitation to me to come to Kaifeng, an ancient city on the famous Silk Road and capital of Henan Province for seven dynasties. I decided to take them up on it, as I have become as spellbound by a general Jewish interest in the Jews of Kaifeng as many Jews worldwide have. Kaifeng has no airport, which I did not realize. After clearing up some misunderstandings that resulted from this lack of knowledge on my part, it was decided that I should take a train from Shanghai

to Kaifeng. How many Chinese does it take to get Professor Schmidt from Shanghai to Kaifeng? You'd be surprised, it took a few. My thanks to my trusted colleague and friend, Professor Guo Changgang, Dean of the Graduate School at Shanghai University, for his invaluable assistance during my stay in China. My seven-hour journey to Kaifeng was very comfortable on the modern high-speed train that only recently connects Kaifeng and Shanghai, and enriched by the presence of "Shirley" (many students who study English take on English names for the convenience of their guests) who acted as my companion.

Our arrival in Kaifeng was tumultuous (by western standards), with throngs of people getting off the train, down and up steep flights of stairs dragging our luggage, to be greeted by another throng of people waiting outside the gate, as well as all manner of taxis imaginable. Several of the teachers and students from last year greeted us, and we were whisked off to the hotel where I slept for the next week. Kaifeng is a big city of about 900,000 residents, and Henan University was not within walking distance. All of our travel was by taxi. The campus is in a lovely, sprawling compound, with a traditional Chinese gate at the entrance. The Institute of Jewish Studies is also located in a traditional Chinese building, although many of the other buildings were huge and modern, providing quite a contrast. This is the old campus of the university, there is also a new one, which I did not have a chance to visit. We studied every day from 8:30-11:30 AM, then ate lunch, took a break, and in the afternoon it was my turn to study, Chinese history and cultural sites. In the evening we ate dinner with some teachers and students, so that I had much one-on-one time with the 12-16 participants in the seminar. I saw first-hand how Chinese and Islamic architecture fuse in a lovely, sprawling mosque complex, I visited the ancient Guild Hall, walked down the street where the Jewish community lived and where its synagogue stood, and I was treated to a most spectacular reenactment of a slice of Kaifeng's history from the Song Dynasty, based on the story painting by Chinese artist Zhang Zeduan.

The time during this week came out of the students' summer vacation. Most

would have gone home to their families, often far away in the countryside of Henan Province, but they stayed so they could study about the Jews, the Holocaust, Israel, Zionism, and ways to teach the Holocaust. Our last evening together was very emotional, as each student prepared a presentation in my honor. Professor Zhang Qianhong started off the festivities with a thank-you speech to which I responded, and then each student either sang a song in Chinese or English or Hebrew, recited a poem, or gave us a riddle. They provided refreshments, and it was a perfect ending to a very rich week of learning. I am deeply grateful to Professor Zhang and the teachers and students of the Institute of Jewish Studies in Kaifeng for this wonderful educational opportunity.



Students and faculty of Institute of Jewish Studies, Henan University, Kaifeng, China.

## Shanghai

Professor Guo Changgang embodies the perfect host, and I will be forever in his debt for the many different types of help he provided while I was in China. I might not have ventured back to China if he hadn't been involved in the planning. It's not easy to communicate without a decent knowledge of Chinese, although there is some English spoken. Professor Guo's plans for this year focused on a scholarly conference on Globalism, Values, and Pluralism with about 20 Chinese and international scholars. The conference and subsequent workshops served as enrichment in the form of summer school for about 85 students who were rewarded with a certificate at the end. It was a great pleasure to be with old friends and to make new ones. In addition to Professor Guo, I was delighted to spend time again with "Jewel" and "Gordon," as well as "Ocean," "Shirley" and "Lilly"

and some of their friends, all lovely individuals.

Before the conference started, Jewel was kind enough to accompany me to the Ohel Moshe Synagogue, built in 1906, which was under repair last year. To my surprise, the repairs were not only completed, but the complex has been turned into the Shanghai Jewish Refugees Museum, a reminder of the 40,000 German Jews who found refuge in the Hongkou District of Shanghai during the Nazi years. Not only has the synagogue been beautifully restored, but the second floor houses an exhibition of Jewish artifacts and of Chinese-Israeli relations. Two separate buildings are home to an exhibition of the stateless refugees and to their rescuer, Viennese Consul General Ho Feng Shan. Around the corner from the synagogue are the blocks of the ghetto where the Jewish refugees lived, along with a memorial in nearby Huoshan Park. Shanghai is preparing for a big cultural festival in 2010, and along with many other Shanghai sites, the historic buildings along Huoshan Road are receiving a face lift as well. Less satisfactory was our attempt to visit the Ohel Rachel Synagogue, built by businessman Sir Jacob Sassoon in 1920 in memory of his late wife. The building houses government offices, so we were only allowed to take a picture from the gate.

I had to travel all the way to China to meet the current president of the American Academy of Religion, Professor and Associate Dean Emilie Townes of Yale University, and Jack Fitzmier, the executive director of the AAR, as well as Patricia Hunter of Baptist Churches USA. Together with Shawn Landres from Los Angeles we made up the American contingent. Other scholars hailed from Japan, Congo, Uruguay, Canada, India, Philippines, Great Britain, Bulgaria, Armenia, and Jordan. The conference days were long and intense, with many different presentations on aspects of different religions and societal constructs. I was surprised at the apparent interest in the Bahai'i, a relatively new monotheistic religion with a deep commitment to social justice and equality. Likewise surprising was the lack of attribution of biblical sources to Judaism. Apparently for some Chinese teachers Christianity began with – Abraham. I presented a paper on the constancy of Jewish values

in a changing environment, chaired a session, acted as respondent to a session, and fielded questions from the conference participants in a workshop. And all the time there, students had many questions – about Judaism, about Israel, about American society, about Barack Obama. The workshop days also allowed for some lovely cultural experiences such as visits to Nanshi, the Old Town of Shanghai; Buddhist and Taoist temples, a very old mosque, a trip to Xitang, a water town, and a lovely moonlight cruise up and down the Huangpu River in Shanghai. Again, it was great to meet all the new friends and to reconnect with previous ones. My deepest gratitude to Professor Guo Changgang and his outstanding team of very dedicated students. You are tops!



"Jewel," Gilya Schmidt, and Professor Guo Changgang, Dean of the Graduate School, Shanghai University, Shanghai, China.

## Kunming

Professor Guo drove me to Hongqiao Airport in Shanghai for the third leg of my Chinese adventure. This was the first time that I was all alone in a land where I could neither read nor speak to get around. I was curious how this would work. After realizing that flights were posted, but that flight departures were not necessarily announced and gates changed often, I looked for a person who had a ticket with my flight number. I simply followed this person around, and it worked. The flight from Shanghai to Kunming made a stop in Changsa. I had to get off the plane with a transit card. How would I know when to get back on? When they were ready to board the transit passengers before general boarding, a man who had noticed me came over to where I was sitting in the waiting area and motioned me to get back on the plane. Because communications had been sporadic, I did not know if anyone would meet me at the airport in Kunming. With such

large crowds it is very hard to find even people holding up signs, but sure enough, eventually a sign with my name popped up, and after some logistics, always on the inevitable cell phone, I was whisked off to the conference center which proved to be an interesting experience for a week. As we had no internet access and no TV channel with English-language broadcasts, we were a bit cut off from the world. One night we decided to walk to town to do email, when we got caught in a thunderstorm and torrential downpour. It was a memorable experience, and I felt very sorry for the two students who went with us and had even less clothing to change into than we did.

This was the Holocaust conference I attended in Shanghai in 2007. It was the fourth such conference, the others having been held in Nanjing, Kaifeng, and Shanghai, and moves around China to capture different Chinese student populations. This conference is organized by the London Centre for Jewish Culture in the name of 25 countries who contribute financially to this effort. The organizer is Gerold Gotel, a transplanted American Jew, and his English speaking resource people are experts on teaching the Holocaust from Yad Vashem, Jerusalem; U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum, Washington, D.C.; the Wannsee House, Berlin, and a British representative. And then there was me. I was contributing a lecture and workshop on "Who are the Jews?" as an introduction to the conference. Many of the Chinese scholars who work on Judaism, the Holocaust, China and Israel, and Israel in the Middle East, participated. While it can be tiring to constantly monitor one's English for clarity, it is even more tiring to listen to an entire lecture in simultaneous translation, in spite of our wonderful translator, Wang Yanxing. Many thanks for your hard work! The 90 or so student participants were teachers and graduate students from a wide array of provinces, such as Chongqing, Kaifeng, Zhejiang, Shanghai, Shanxi, Beijing, Shandong, Guizhou, Guangxi as well as Sichuan and Inner Mongolia. They were hungry for information on many different subjects and for source material on things Jewish, but also just American. The conference schedule was brutal, with very long days. Several of us were able to see something of Kunming and environs

at the end of the conference, when we hired a driver to take us to Shilin, the famous 270-million-year-old limestone karst forest. Alas, it rained buckets, so that we did not have an optimal outdoor experience. Yunnan Province borders on a number of Southeast Asian countries such as Vietnam, Laos, Myanmar, and India, and is home to 26 of China's 56 ethnic minorities. Each ethnic minority has its own dress, culture, and culinary delicacies. In Kunming, the city of eternal spring, one can find a plethora of temples. I was only able to see one of the Buddhist temples, again in the rain, but surrounded by a fabulous aura, as the nuns, whose chanting could be heard in the entire compound, were conducting a major service. The atmosphere was quite precious. After the service all the participants were served a bowl full of food, an *oneg* of sorts. I also had the chance to see lovely old city gates and, not far from there, the Tang Dynasty East and the West Pagodas. During World War II, Kunming was the easternmost portal of the Burma Road, and home to one of the squadrons of the famous Flying Tigers who flew interference against the Japanese while the supply road was being built. A very sincere and heartfelt thank you to Gerry Gotel and his Chinese counterparts for their hard work in organizing this meaningful and important learning experience.



Gilya Schmidt, Professor Xu Xin, Guilford and Diane Glazer Center for Jewish Studies, Nanjing University, Nanjing, China, and Richelle Budd Caplan, Yad Vashem, Jerusalem, in Kunming, China.

## Research Rural German Jewry

With one exception, all of the detective work for my book on rural German Jews has been completed. Although sources are the foundation of any scholarly work, witnesses in time add so much to the dry knowledge of documents. This past year, I was able to continue my connection with Hugo and Inge Lang

and to add new faces – Lilo Guggenheim Levine and her husband Mel, Lilli Netter Vandermeulen and her daughter Debbie, and Werner Ottenheimer and his daughter and granddaughter.

- In May of 2007, it was with great joy that I visited once again with Hugo and Inge Lang in New Jersey to bring them an update on the book and on events in Germany. One of the latest developments of German atonement is the installation of commemorative *Stolpersteine*, or stumbling blocks, into the sidewalks in front of former Jewish properties. Last year, also in Hugo's hometown of Süssen, plans were being made to embed 13 cobblestones with the names of his loved ones who were murdered by the Nazis into the sidewalk in front of their former home. This event was approved by the city council in early 2008 and the installation ceremony was held in February.

- I also had the good fortune to meet



*Stolpersteine* for Hugo's parents, Eva and Leopold Lang, in Süssen, Germany.

Lilo Guggenheim Levine and her husband Mel as well as Lilli Netter Vandermeulen. Lilo and Lilli were childhood friends in Göppingen, Germany, in the 1930s. In spite of being friends, both had very different experiences as Jews. Yet, when Hitler came to power, both had to leave Germany in order to survive. During one precious weekend in August, when Lilli and her daughter Debbie traveled to Saranac Lake, New York, they were able to reminisce about their life as



Liselotte (Lilo) Guggenheim Levine.

Jewish children in Germany, and I was able to visit with them to record much of what they remembered. It was a precious moment in history, and I am very grateful for the experience.

- Having established contact by telephone with another son of Jewish Göppingen in summer of 2007, I made plans to visit 91-year-old Werner Ottenheimer in Havana, Cuba, in late December 2007. Traveling to Cuba in itself was exciting and educational, but finally meeting a living member of the Ottenheimer family of Göppingen and Süssen made all of the research work come to life. No more dry bones, but a real person who remembered what it was like in the 1920s and 1930s in Göppingen and in Süssen. I wrote a brief essay on the Cuba trip, it is posted on the Judaic Studies website at [web.utk.edu/~judaic](http://web.utk.edu/~judaic).



Werner Ottenheimer, Havana, Cuba.

## German Research Seminar

The interdisciplinary German Research Seminar on *Insiders/Outsiders in Modern Germany and Central Europe*, which Assistant Professor David Tompkins introduced in 2006, is continuing for a third year. Unfortunately Dr. Tompkins has moved to a different institution. While we wish him all the best in his new endeavors, we will miss him in the seminar. Continuing core members include Professors Vejas Liulevicius and Denise Phillips from the History Department, Professors Daniel Magilow, Maria Stehle, Stefanie Ohnesorg, and David Lee from German, and myself. We acknowledge with much gratitude the ongoing financial support of the College of Arts and Sciences Humanities Initiative.

During 2007-08, I contributed a discussion of two books to our seminar, Jeffrey Herf's *The Jewish Enemy: Nazi Propaganda During World War II and the Holocaust* and Omer Bartov's *Erased:*

*Vanishing Traces of Jewish Galicia in Present-Day Ukraine*. It was our good fortune to have Professor Omer Bartov from Brown University visit Knoxville and give a public lecture on his own research in the Ukraine. Over the summer I completed the first draft of my book manuscript, and asked colleagues Daniel Magilow and Andrew Bergerson, from the University of Missouri, as well as friends Stephanie and Eric Banks for comments and feedback. On September 5, Professor Bergerson visited Knoxville to both comment on the manuscript in our seminar and to give a public lecture on his own work. My thanks to everyone for their hard work and sacrifice.

While the research has been processed and turned into a book manuscript, the work is not done. Now comes the hard task of double checking citations and quotes and of editing the text in various ways.

In fall 2007, I was invited by the Humanities Initiative to make a lunch-time presentation on my research. The lecture, entitled "Can Grand Larceny and Good Neighboring Exist Side by Side? The Case of Two Jewish Families in Swabia," discussed the deception and dishonesty of local Germans towards their Jewish neighbors during the Nazi period.

## Jewish Liturgy Project

During spring semester I will need to prepare for travel to Germany in summer of 2009 to gather additional material for the Jewish liturgy project on Cantor Mordecai G. Heiser. This will be the next project that I hope to advance in 2009-10.

## Conferences

During 2007-08 I participated in the annual meeting of the American Academy of Religion, where I discussed the significance of our "Living On" project as an educational vehicle.

In July, while in China, I gave ten lectures and two workshops, and served as a chair as well as a respondent to conference sessions and papers.

My conference schedule for this academic year is ambitious. I had papers accepted by the German Studies Association in October, the American Academy of Religion in November, and the International Humanities Conference

in January. Without a doubt the most exciting opportunity that has come my way is a collaboration with Marilyn Kallet and Kali Meister and Mimi Schwarz for the AWF (Association of Writers and Writing Programs) in February. We are producing a play on our research that we will present to our colleagues. I will also attend the annual meeting of the Association for Jewish Studies in December and organize and chair sessions as well as read a paper for the annual meeting of the Southeast Commission for the Study of Religion (SECSOR) in March.

## Service

There are many opportunities for service at the professional level, the university level, and to the public. Since 1996 I have served as chair of the Judaism Section of SECSOR. Starting in January 2009, I have been appointed to the International Connections Committee of the American Academy of Religion, a three-year term. I also serve on the editorial board of *Soundings*, and serve as one of their referees for paper submissions. This year I also started a three-year term on the UT Press Board, a return engagement for me, to which I look forward very much. I continue to serve as head of the Department of Religious Studies and as chair of the Judaic Studies program. In November 2007, I had the honor of speaking at a memorial service for former Arts and Sciences Dean Larry Ratner. Dean Ratner worked tirelessly with Charlie Reynolds and members of the Jewish community to make the first endowment for Judaic Studies happen. I remember fondly traveling to Chicago with a delegation from UT when Manny Steinfeld was being honored by the Chicago Federation. Larry was among those who congratulated him. Among the outreach activities this past year were a Rosh Hodesh program for Heska Amuna Sisterhood on the significance of Purim, a presentation on the consequences of the Holocaust to the residents at the O'Connor Senior Center, a Friendshippers program on the experience of growing up Jewish in southern Germany, and lunch with Coach Fulmer, his staff, and other faculty. In April, I was invited by Webb School to speak to the students and faculty about Passover. I also spoke to

the membership of the Fairview United Methodist Church in Maryville on understanding the Middle East conflict.

## TENNESSEE HOLOCAUST COMMISSION

[www.tennesseeholocaustcommission.org](http://www.tennesseeholocaustcommission.org)

In August I was sworn into my fifth term as Commissioner on the Tennessee Holocaust Commission. We continue to do interesting work and exciting projects that I enjoy being part of.

"Living On," Robert Heller's stunning photography project, received international recognition in summer 2007 when the photographs and survivor stories traveled to Poland for an exhibition at the American Embassy in Warsaw. Rob traveled to Poland to introduce the photographs to the public. From Warsaw the exhibition traveled to other Polish cities.



From left to right: Professor Rob Heller, Tennessee Holocaust Commission Chair Felicia Anchor, Chief Rabbi of Poland Michael Schudrich, U.S. Ambassador to Poland Victor Ashe.

While we were enjoying the success of the exhibition at home and abroad, UT Press was busy completing the production of Rob's photographs in book form. The book, *Living On*, has recently been released by UT Press and copies should be available shortly. Please check the UT Press website for more information <http://utpress.org>.

## JEWISH FACULTY OUTREACH

The Knoxville Jewish Alliance chose for one of its projects to reach out to the Jewish faculty at UT. During the two years that this program has existed we introduced Provost Bob Holub and Dean Bruce Bursten of the College of Arts and

Sciences as well as Israeli Ambassador Reda Mansour to the faculty. In spring 2008 Vice Provost Todd Diacon was the guest speaker. At the fall 2008 event, our guest of honor was Dr. Rivka Ribak, our Schusterman Visiting Israel Professor, who spoke about her work in communication.

## JEWISH STUDENT CENTER/HILLEL

Jewish students at UT are thriving under the very able leadership of Deborah Oleshansky. Deborah has managed an impossible situation very well. The Jewish Student Center/Hillel has no permanent housing on campus. Through creative solutions, Deborah has solved the housing crisis, temporarily to be sure, but she refuses to let this small detail disrupt the students' activities. For Jewish Student Center information please go to their website at <http://www.utk.edu/~uthillel>, or write to Deborah at [doleshansky@jewishknoxville.org](mailto:doleshansky@jewishknoxville.org).



David Cohen, Coach Bruce Pearl, Igor Fayermark, and Jonathan Coplon enjoy the Hillel opening program for fall semester 2008.

## SHTETL NEWS

As always, happy times intermingle with sad ones. A hearty mazal tov to several members of our community for honors they received this past year.

In Spring 2008, Rabbi Beth Schwartz of Temple Beth El received a Spiritual Leadership Award from the Tennessee Conference Community Development Corporation of the AME Zion Church.

On Monday, November 5, 2007, Dr. Alan Solomon was honored for his many years of dedication to the Knoxville Museum of Art with the tenth annual James L. Clayton Award. Dr. Solomon, who is the recipient of the longest-running research grant at UT, heads the

University of Tennessee Graduate School of Medicine's Human Immunology and Cancer Program here in Knoxville.



Dr. Alan Solomon and Gilya Schmidt.

Arnold Schwarzbart was fortunate to have not only one show of his art this past year, but two. In spring, his work was in a three-man show, "Beyond Aesthetics," at the William King Regional Arts Center in Abingdon, Virginia. Recently, Arnold had a one-man show of his work at the UT Downtown Gallery entitled, "Reflections of the Other," which was very well attended by art connoisseurs as well as many of Arnold and Mary Linda's friends.



Dr. Jack Benhayon, Arnold Schwarzbart, and Judith Benhayon at UT Downtown Gallery.

Dr. Bruce E. Bursten, Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, was honored by his profession by being elected as 2008 President of the 160,000 member American Chemical Society. ACS is the world's largest scientific organization.



Mira Kimmelman, Gilya Schmidt, Dr. David Linwood, Cindy and Ric Pasi.

In December 2007, Mira and Gilya participated in Jewish Book Month at Borders in Turkey Creek.

Friends Hugo and Inge Lang in New Jersey and Mira Kimmelman in Oak Ridge are celebrating their 85<sup>th</sup> birthdays this year. What a milestone!

Dr. David Morrison, David ben Moshe, Jerusalem, published a fascinating book on Friedrich Nietzsche and the Jews. Entitled, *The Secret of the Jews: Letters to Nietzsche*, it is available from Gefen Publishing House ([www.israelbooks.com](http://www.israelbooks.com)), 2008.

During the 24<sup>th</sup> annual YWCA Tribute to Women awards ceremony, Gilya Schmidt was honored with the Phyllis Wheatley Memorial Humanitarian Award. It was a great honor and a lovely evening. Much gratitude to those of you who contributed in my honor and who came to celebrate with me. It's a

once-in-a-lifetime experience.

In June, Dr. Robert Levy, Vice President for Academic Affairs, and his wife, Dr. Karen Levy, Professor of French, long-time friends, retired from the university. We wish you much happiness in your second life, whatever that will turn out to be.

We are sad to acknowledge the recent death of Professor Bezalel Narkiss, founder of the Center for Jewish Art at Hebrew University in Jerusalem. Professor Narkiss, who became a friend to several of us here in Knoxville, visited Knoxville in 1994 to give a lecture on Jewish art.

A few years ago, following Addie's death, a Knoxville tradition came to an end with the closing of Harold's kosher-style Deli on Gay Street. In July, Harold Shersky joined Addie in her eternal rest, something neither of them enjoyed in

this life. Jewish life in Knoxville will never be the same, but we will always remember them fondly and with gratitude. May their memory be for a blessing.

**Books for China-Thank You!**



Gilya Schmidt with Jewish books donated by Knoxville Jewish community to Henan University, Kaifeng, China.

**Visit the Knoxville Jewish Alliance Web site:**  
[www.jewishknoxville.org](http://www.jewishknoxville.org)

## Become a friend of Judaic Studies at UT

The Fern and Manfred Steinfeld Program in Judaic Studies is in its second decade. Public lectures, in collaboration with other UT departments and the Knoxville Jewish Alliance, Holocaust Conferences, book discussions, as well as cultural experiences such as trips to the U.S. Holocaust Museum in Washington, D.C., have helped to educate on campus as well as in the Jewish community and the community at large. Your support can help to make our program better and stronger. If you wish to make a contribution, the following funds are available:

- THE FERN AND MANFRED STEINFELD SCHOLARSHIP FUND IN JUDAIC STUDIES \_\_\_\_\_
- JUDAIC STUDIES LECTURE FUND, RELIGIOUS STUDIES \_\_\_\_\_
- JUDAIC STUDIES CHAIR ENDOWMENT, RELIGIOUS STUDIES \_\_\_\_\_
- JUDAIC STUDIES SUPPORT FUND, RELIGIOUS STUDIES \_\_\_\_\_
- ABRAHAM AND REBECCA SOLOMON AND IDA SCHWARTZ DISTINGUISHED LECTURE FUND FOR JUDAIC STUDIES, RELIGIOUS STUDIES \_\_\_\_\_
- DR. RUBEN ROBINSON MEMORIAL FUND, RELIGIOUS STUDIES \_\_\_\_\_
- MANFRED AND FERN STEINFELD PROFESSORSHIP ENDOWMENT IN JUDAIC HISTORY, HISTORY DEPARTMENT \_\_\_\_\_

## How to contact us

DEPARTMENT OF  
RELIGIOUS STUDIES  
501 McCLUNG TOWER  
THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE  
KNOXVILLE, TN 37996-0450

TELEPHONE (865) 974-2466  
FAX (865) 974-0965

E-MAIL  
DR. GILYA GERDA SCHMIDT:  
GSCHMIDT@UTK.EDU  
DR. J. P. DESSEL:  
JDESSEL@UTK.EDU

**The Fern & Manfred Steinfeld  
Program in Judaic Studies**  
is located in  
501 McClung Tower

You can also find us on the Web:  
[web.utk.edu/~judaic](http://web.utk.edu/~judaic)

All qualified applicants will receive equal consideration for employment without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, sex, pregnancy, marital status, sexual orientation, age, physical or mental disability, or covered veteran status.

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In accordance with the requirements of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, The University of Tennessee affirmatively states that it does not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, or disability in its education programs and activities, and this policy extends to employment by the University.

Inquiries and charges of violation of Title VI (race, color, national origin), Title IX (sex), Section 504 (disability), A.D.A. (disability), Age Discrimination in Employment Act (age), sexual orientation, or veteran status should be directed to the Office of Equity and Diversity (OED), 1840 Melrose Avenue, Knoxville, TN 37996-3560, telephone (865) 974-2498 (V/TTY available) or 974-2440. Requests for accommodation of a disability should be directed to the ADA Coordinator at the Office of Equity and Diversity.

THE NEWSLETTER of the  
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 Program in Judaic Studies  
 THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE



The Department of Religious Studies  
 501 McClung Tower  
 The University of Tennessee  
 Knoxville, TN 37996-0450  
 Telephone (865) 974-2466

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