

## Memorial: Simon L. Goren (1913—2000)

Rabbi. *Webster's Third New International Dictionary* defines “rabbi” as a teacher, a master. Simon L. Goren was my teacher and my master.

I first met Simon Goren at Case Western Reserve University in the fall of 1969. He was my instructor for legal research and writing as a first-year law student. My first impression of Professor Goren was that he was an imposing man. He had exemplary bearing, he was impeccably dressed, and he had a deep voice. He was also a man who knew legal research and all its nuances, and loved communicating that knowledge to his students. He taught me in that first class to love the challenge of legal research. He opened the door to all the tools of traditional legal research methodology. He taught me that legal research was something to enjoy—that it was a search for answers similar to a crossword puzzle. It was more than a trade; it was an art.

My education continued under Professor Goren when he hired me as a first-year law student library assistant. I learned loose-leaf filing. I learned techniques in staffing the circulation and reference desks. I learned that librarianship was a service profession. I learned to love that service. In 1971, Case Western Reserve University Law School became the first law school to install OBAR-Lexis, the precursor to today's LEXIS-NEXIS system. Simon Goren was the librarian who had the vision to see the importance of computer-assisted legal research. He was also the first to recognize how it would change the practice of law and law librarianship.

As a third-year law student, my relationship with Professor Goren changed. He became my mentor. We talked about my entering the profession of law librarianship. He advised me to start by practicing law. He felt that to be a librarian, you had to really want to be a librarian. If I started with librarianship, without practicing law first, I would forever wonder *what if*.

Following his counsel, I started practice in a small Ohio town. The practice was originally one of the most exciting periods of my life, but it rapidly became just another job. In 1974, Professor Goren telephoned me. He asked if I was ready to trade the practice of law for the profession of law librarianship. I decided that it was time to do so. Because of his counsel, I have enjoyed law librarianship and never looked back.

As a public services librarian and later associate law librarian at Case Western Reserve University Law School, my education under Professor Goren continued. He taught me how to administer a law library. He taught me skills and how to deal with human relationships. He taught me budgeting. He taught me library management.

Simon Goren was also a professor of Library and Information Science at Case

Western Reserve Library and Information Science School. As such, he led one of the few programs in law librarianship. He recognized early the interdependence of law librarianship and other forms of librarianship. He cemented my library relationships at the School of Business, the School of Medicine, the University Libraries, and at the School of Applied Social Sciences. He was also an internationalist. He taught me legal research using English, Canadian, and civil law materials. He built an outstanding collection of foreign resources at Case Western Reserve.

As my Rabbi, he continued to teach me even after I had left Case Western Reserve and became librarian at Baker & Hostetler in 1978. His new lessons were even more important than those I had received as his student and employee. First of all, he taught me to embrace change. He learned early in life that change was something we always would deal with. He left Hungary in 1933 for Turkey, then Palestine, and finally the United States. He worked variously as a tractor driver, police officer, law student, prosecutor, library student, and librarian. As a librarian, he worked in both the academic and firm environments.

Simon Goren taught me that life was short. He taught that you had to love what you do. He taught the passion of detail and to love librarianship and librarians. He taught me to know what you want.

Simon Goren taught me to laugh. He had a perpetual smile. His eyes showed a joy of life and the humor in the human condition. He had a deep sense of humor that stayed with him for all the time I knew him.

He taught me to see; he taught me to look with care at things in my library, at the people I met, and at life in general. He loved the beauty that surrounded him, whether it was a park in Ithaca, New York, or the flowers of Vancouver, British Columbia.

He taught me to love learning. That learning was a lifelong experience. He taught me to keep an open mind and to enjoy discussions of many diverse topics.

He taught me to savor life and to enjoy the little things that make up our daily existence—whether they be buying chocolates, eating good bread, or chasing rainbows. We should not let any of these things go by in haste.

He taught me to abhor bigotry of all types. I believe he learned this personally in his native Hungary when he was forbidden to attend medical school in 1933 simply because of his Jewish heritage and religion. This abhorrence of bigotry carried over into all levels of his life. Simon Goren detested racial bigotry, discrimination by gender, by age, by sexual preference, physical condition, or credentialism. He taught me that the only criteria by which to judge fellow human beings was whether they could do the job and what kind of person they were.

He taught me the deeper understanding of faith. Faith not only in religion, but also in humankind. He was religious, but not conspicuously so. We discussed religious philosophy. He taught me love for his Jewish faith and helped me achieve a deeper understanding and love of my own. He taught me to respect others, no

matter what their faith, and always to judge my fellow human beings not by what they professed but by how they behaved.

He taught me the value of friendship. He taught that a friend listens to you and that a friend is someone you can trust with your deepest feelings. He taught that a friend is loyal, and loyalty is perhaps the greatest virtue. He taught me that a friend is honest and will disagree with you when you are, in the friend's opinion, wrong. He taught that friendship can accept disagreement. He taught that a friend helps another friend.

He taught the values of being a good husband and a good father, that first of all a husband and father is a friend to his wife and children, and that a husband and father is willing to sacrifice for their benefit.

He taught me that a person does not become a "was." A person continues after death through his or her effect on their family and friends. He taught that people continue as long as those who knew and loved them carry on his or her values.

Simon Goren, he was my Rabbi, he was my friend.—*Alvin M. Podboy*<sup>1</sup>

Simon Goren is a shining example of a scholar-librarian whose intellectual endeavors and professional library work intertwined, creating a significant presence made even stronger by his dedication to his dual roles as scholar and librarian. Simon is also an eminent representative of that class of lawyer-librarians whose outstanding scholarly credentials and dedicated work won and justified the respect and status that law librarians enjoy today.

Born in Hungary, Professor Goren escaped the despotism of Nazi Germany by immigrating to Turkey and then to Palestine, where he earned a Diploma of Law from the British Mandatory Government's Law School in Jerusalem. Simon was a prosecutor and attorney in Israel until he immigrated to the United States in 1959. In the U.S. he became a librarian, obtaining his M.L.S. from Columbia University in 1960. Simon's first position in his new profession of law librarianship was at the law firm of Cleary, Gottlieb, Steen, and Hamilton in New York City. In 1964 Simon joined the staff at the Cornell University School of Law as an assistant law librarian. After three years at Cornell, he was hired by the Western Reserve University School of Law in 1967, where he served as Law Librarian and Professor of Law until he retired in 1983. At his retirement, CWRU awarded him the title of Professor Emeritus in recognition of his service and scholarship.

Those are his credentials. What they cannot capture are the intellectual contributions Simon Goren made to our profession and the impact that his life, his teaching, and his kind, professional guidance had on so many law librarians. He was a great teacher—I have only to watch the librarians whom he taught to know he trained and mentored well with great affection. His students are now leaders in

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their law libraries at firms, academic institutions and government agencies. He was a great scholar—the first time I met several of the European bibliographers at the Library of Congress they placed me by remembering that I was Simon’s successor at Case Western Reserve. These superb language specialists used their greatest superlatives to express their admiration for Simon Goren, explaining to me the high regard in which they held Simon’s translations. These colleagues at LC recognized—and honored—Simon Goren as a prominent scholar doing important, vital work.

You can find Simon’s work on the shelves of many academic law libraries. His translations include the *German Civil Code* (with Forrester and Iglén, Rothman, 1975), *Introductory Act to the German Civil Code and Marriage Law of the Federal Republic of Germany* (Rothman, 1976), *The German Civil Code including Maritime Commerce* (Rothman, 1979, rev. 1982), *Mining and Drilling Law of Austria Hungary FDR and DDR* (Oceana, 1987), the *German Civil Code* (as amended to January 1, 1992) (Rothman, 1994), the *German Commercial Code* (revised and amended to October 28, 1994) (Rothman, 1998). These titles were frequently supplemented and updated because of their acceptance and high use by lawyers and business people throughout the world. His translations are a body of remarkable works of scholarship which attest to Professor Goren’s intellectual gifts and contributions.

Today’s world of technology promises a future nirvana where automated translations are available at the speed of a scanner. But such a concept is far from a reality, especially in highly technical fields like law. We should never fail to acknowledge and applaud the dedicated, special scholarship of those who study and translate the words of others, identifying the proper syntax, the hidden nuance, the diplomatic phrase that allow readers to make decisions with full confidence of the accuracy of the translation. Perhaps the biggest test of a translator’s skill is a legal code, which by its very nature can capture the obtuse yet be precise, aim to be definitive yet provide flexibility. A legal translator must possess a very special combination of talents to be so fluent in a topic and languages that they can capture the true, legal meaning of highly technical words and phrases.

The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines translation as “the conveyance from one person, place or condition to another.” The skilled legal translator captures and conveys the accurate connotation of a legal phrase in a way that is so dependable that lawyers, businesses, courts and governments can rely on the translation for their work and decisions. The success of Simon’s translations is attested to by the high demand that existed for him to produce additional editions, updates, and translations of other laws.

The OED definition of translations also applies to Simon’s role as a teacher. As a professor at the Case Western Reserve University Law School and the Library and Information Science School, he taught and trained many lawyers and librarians. In his role as a teacher Professor Goren “translated” or conveyed from

one person to another a knowledge and respect for legal bibliography. Simon's respect and love for the law and librarianship was deep, and he freely shared that feeling with his students.

Simon Goren was a good man, a scholar, a lawyer, and a librarian. He left as legacies inspiration to those who knew him, and translations that will be used forever to the world. Thank you Simon.—*Kathleen Carrick*<sup>2</sup>

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