



ANDREW REHFELD, PH.D.: A NEW ERA AT HUC

Renee Ghert-Zand, *The Times of Israel*

In December 2018, Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion appointed Andrew Rehfeld, Ph.D., as its 10th president. Rehfeld, who assumed his post this past April, is the first non-rabbi to helm Judaism's Reform Movement's flagship seminary and center for higher education in its 144 year history. Rehfeld succeeds Rabbi Aaron Panken, who died in a plane crash in May 2018.

An associate professor of political science at Washington University in St. Louis who headed the St. Louis Jewish Federation from 2012 to 2019, Rehfeld recently moved to New York. However, he's seeing little of his new home this summer and fall as he travels to each of HUC-JIR's four campuses in New York, Los Angeles, Cincinnati,

and Jerusalem, spending a month at each. His aim is to become more familiar with HUC-JIR's rabbinical and cantorial schools, and its Jewish education and nonprofit leadership graduate programs. He will meet with faculty and administrators, as well as with some of the 330 students who are enrolled in degree programs every year.

"Right now I'd say I'm living in a dedicated seat on Delta Airlines," Rehfeld joked in a recent interview with *The Times of Israel* at HUC-JIR's Taube Family Campus in Jerusalem.

For Rehfeld, 53, it's important to watch, listen, and learn before embarking on any new strategic planning. In Rehfeld's view, not being a rabbi and coming in from outside the institution is an advantage at this point in HUC-JIR's history, given present challenges and opportunities within the American Jewish community, as well as in Israel. Having grown up in the Reform Movement and served on the boards of multiple synagogues, he knows what it is to be "a Jew in the pew" and has been profoundly and positively influenced by good rabbinical leadership.

President Andrew Rehfeld (center) with first-year Year-In-Israel students/Weitzman-JDC Fellows (from left) Aaron Torop, Tim Gaylord, Madeline Budman, Jamie Field, and Aaron Blasband at the Taube Family Campus, Jerusalem.

[Karin Mendelson]

"I bring new eyes. It's very hard for organizations in the middle of dynamic shifts to make them from within, so I think there is a greater opportunity not just for me, but for anyone coming from the outside," Rehfeld said. The new president said he would rely on the expertise of the rabbis in the HUC administration, especially with regard to the rabbinical school curriculum, pastoral counseling, and the ordination of students.

Rehfeld, who is married to a psychiatrist and father to two adult children, is quick to de-emphasize his unique status. "The historic break that has been made a big deal of is wrong for two reasons. Number one, HUC has long trained Jewish leaders beyond rabbis. That decision was made decades ago. Furthermore, most university and college presidents are experts in one field and not experts in most of the others. [They do] it by relying on the expertise that's there and knowing [their] limits. Bringing managerial expertise and inspiring people about the prospects of professional leadership in the Jewish public sphere is what it is about," Rehfeld said.

In a wide-ranging conversation with *The Times of Israel*, Rehfeld shared his views on a variety of subjects, including the role of Reform Judaism in an era when young people eschew synagogue-centric, denominational Jewish life, and the importance of Hebrew. Rehfeld spoke about where Reform stands during a time of growing rifts within the American Jewish community, and between American Jews and Israel.



Why did you want this job?

There are personal and professional reasons. First the professional: I am committed to vibrant Jewish communities and to the future and sustainability of the Jewish People. There is no other organization that trains leaders that has as large an impact on the Jewish public sphere — certainly in North America — as HUC.

On the personal level, I have had two prior careers: one as an academic and one as CEO of the Jewish Federation of St. Louis. This was the opportunity to bring both of those into sync — to return to an academic footing, but in a position of leadership, management, fundraising, strategic planning, and public messaging. I'm able to live a more complete life.

What is the relevance of Reform Judaism at a time when young American Jews are either disengaged from Jewish life or abandoning Jewish labels and denominations?

The short answer is: I'm not sure. [President of the Union for Reform Judaism Rabbi] Rick Jacobs has said as much, perhaps not as directly, about the end of denominationalism. I think it's really important to distinguish between movements and underlying philosophies and ideologies. Movements are networks of institutions and organizations that are all swimming in the same direction for a certain purpose. I think you are seeing a weakening of those institutions. What I don't think has lost relevancy is the ideologies of liberal Judaism that underlie what the movement has been and maybe will continue to be about. I think what HUC as an educational institution is doing is helping people understand what the core of liberal Judaism is. It's a Judaism that places reason as the preeminent human capacity, and that understands that our engagement in Torah, ritual practice, and Jewish community is designed to lead us to the good and the right and the just. That gives a level of authenticity and depth to Jewish practice. The articulation of it may not be in brick and mortar synagogues, or in places identified with the Reform Movement, but it's happening... I think that the denominations and the movements are changing quickly

Top: **Meeting with Israeli President Reuven Rivlin, Jerusalem.** [Mark Neiman GPO]

Left: **With students and alumni at the Skirball Campus, Los Angeles.**



“There is no other organization that trains leaders that has as large an impact on the Jewish public sphere – certainly in North America – as HUC.”

— President Rehfeld

and it's all the more reason that we need to be focusing on our core: what makes a liberal Jew a liberal Jew, and on liberal Judaism as an ideology. I think Reform Judaism as a movement provides the institutional apparatus for this transformation. There will always be a place and vibrancy for liberal Judaism, and HUC is here to train the next generation to lead in a time of change, and to create a new set of institutions.

In recent years, educators have recognized the importance of imparting a non-Holocaust-centric Jewish identity to their students. How will HUC prepare graduates to educate for a positive Jewish identity in a time of increased anti-Semitism?

Judaism is a substantive set of ideas that are joyful, life affirming, and that enrich our lives immeasurably. That is how we should lead, that is how we are leading, and that is how we will lead. We have to recognize that anti-Semitism is rising, but it is a particular kind of anti-Semitism. It's populist anti-Semitism, and it's a kind that has existed and probably will exist forever, it seems, in the hearts and minds of some individuals. What has changed recently is the willingness of public figures, particularly in the U.S., to allow the expression of it to go forward without condemning it, without stopping it. But the state, even in the U.S., is not behind promoting the anti-Semitism. There is a huge difference between what we are seeing and the statist anti-Semitism of Nazi Germany, and we have to take this into account in assessing what kind of threat this is. We still lead and train on the joy of Jewish life and we can't live in fear. We also have to put this fear into context. The relative threat of being harmed as a Jew today is almost certainly lower in world historic terms than at any time. We have to be cognizant that the anti-Semitism we are seeing in the U.S. is part and parcel of racism, in particular anti-Muslim

racism. We need to be inspired by our Jewish values that say that where hatred exists we have a responsibility to address it.

How important is Hebrew in the training of professional leaders for the Jewish community?

I think Hebrew is important. Hebrew takes immersion to understand and fully grasp. So long as we have communities that are not invested in sending their kids to Israel on long-term programs, the hope of really investing in Hebrew education in our communities will always be in a sense an important, but a marginal area. For my predecessor, Rabbi Aaron Panken, Ph.D., z"l, this was a critically important part of the education for our HUC students, and I could not agree more. However, we're challenged because our communities don't emphasize Hebrew. That means if we are going to train the next generation [of leaders], we could put all kinds of limits on who can be admitted, versus seeing [introductory-level Hebrew instruction] as the beginning of a longer term ongoing learning.

(Continued on page 14)



Top: Addressing the CCAR Convention, Cincinnati.

Right: With CCAR Chief Executive Rabbi Hara Person '98, and URJ President Rabbi Rick Jacobs '92, Cincinnati.

GRADUATION/ORDINATION 2019

HISTORIC “FIRSTS”

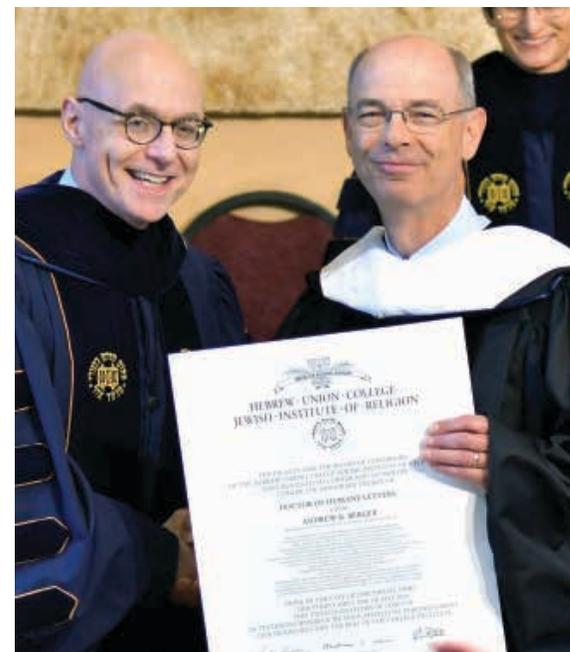
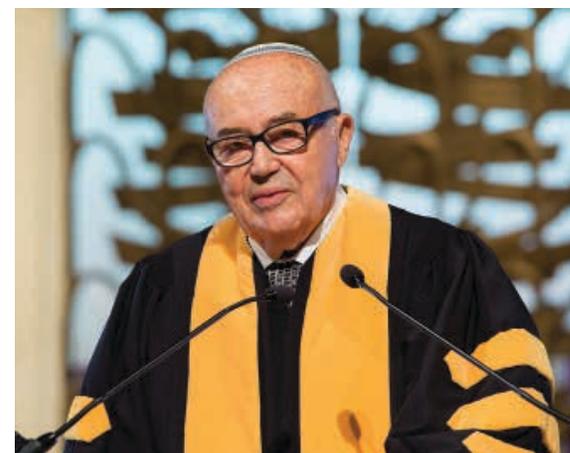
Andrew Rehfeld, Ph.D., for the first time in his tenure as HUC-JIR's President, bestowed 89 degrees on the graduates and ordinees of the Class of 2019; presented honorary doctorates to **Former U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, Ph.D.**, USC Presidential Chair and Professor of Electrical Engineering **Andrew Viterbi, Ph.D.**, and immediate past HUC-JIR Board of Governors Chair **Andrew R. Berger**; awarded 58 honorary doctorates to distinguished alumni marking 25 years of service to the Reform Movement and the Jewish People; presented the **Roger E. Joseph Prize** to **public health activist Dr. Mona Hanna-Attisha** of Flint, MI; and bestowed the **Sherut L'Am Award** on **Deborah Lipstadt, Ph.D.**, Dorot Professor of Modern Jewish History and Holocaust Studies, Emory University.

President Rehfeld counseled the Class of 2019, “Go forth from here, deploying the wisdom you have developed from your HUC-JIR education, to build strong communities, establish vital Jewish and larger public spheres, and lead us to create lives of dignity, meaning, and purpose for ourselves, and pursuing Justice for all as part of a life well lived.”

Rabbi Andrea Weiss '93, Ph.D., Jack, Joseph and Morton Mandel Provost, became the first woman to ordain rabbis and cantors for the Reform Movement in HUC-JIR's 144-year-long history. “Our newly ordained rabbis and cantors are pledged to preserve the age-old covenant between God and Israel and privileged to spend their days working to ensure the vitality of our Jewish heritage as a wellspring of meaning and connection, a much-needed force for good in today's world,” said Rabbi Weiss.

Ordination Addresses were presented by Rabbi Lawrence A. Hoffman '69, Ph.D. '73, Barbara and Stephen Friedman Professor Emeritus of Liturgy, Worship, and Ritual; Rabbi Tamara Cohn Eskenazi '13, Ph.D., Effie Wise Ochs Professor of Biblical Literature and History; and Rabbi Hara Person '98, Chief Executive, CCAR.

Top row (from left): **Graduation speakers Dr. Madeleine Albright; Dr. Andrew Viterbi**; Second row: **Los Angeles Rabbinical Ordination Class**; Bottom row (from left): **Ordination of Allyson Resnik Jacobson '19 by Rabbi Andrea Weiss '93, Ph.D.**; **Dr. Andrew Rehfeld and Andrew R. Berger.**





Top row: Cincinnati Rabbinical Ordination Class; Second row (from left): New York Rabbinical and Cantorial Ordination Class; Joseph Prize recipient Dr. Mona Hanna-Attisha; Rabbi Gary P. Zola '82, Ph.D. '91 and Dr. Deborah Lipstadt; Third row (from left): Doctor of Ministry recipient Lois Perelson-Gross '19; School of Education graduates; Doctor of Philosophy in Judaic, Hebraic, and Cognate Studies recipient Gregory Allen Snyder '19; Bottom row: Zelikow School of Jewish Nonprofit Management graduates and Director Erik Ludwig, Ph.D.

INSPIRING LEADERS AND STRENGTHENING ISRAELI-NORTH AMERICAN REFORM JEWISH TIES

Suzanne and John Golden

Suzanne and John Golden were honored for their decades of dedicated commitment to HUC-JIR and the Jewish People at the "In Celebration" Dinner in New York on June 3, 2019. The tribute dinner, which raised \$1.65 million to support HUC-JIR, introduced HUC-JIR's new President, Andrew Rehfeld, Ph.D., to the New York community. Over 300 leaders of the Reform Movement, alumni, faculty, students, and friends of the Golden family attended the festive event.

President Rehfeld, the keynote speaker at the event, stated, "This institution is truly blessed to have Suzanne and John's devoted leadership and tremendous support. Ever since joining the Board of Governors in 2003, John has applied his considerable wisdom and experience

to help transform HUC-JIR. When Suzanne and John recognized the urgency of strengthening our recruitment, they were there to provide the essential support. When they saw that there was a widening gap separating American Jews and Israel, they created the Golden Family Hanassi Fellows Program. In so many ways, John and Suzanne have immeasurably enhanced the excellence of HUC-JIR."

For over 16 years, John Golden has served on the HUC-JIR Board of Governors, including as Vice Chair, Chair of the Nominating and Israel Committees, and a member of the Executive, Investment, and Presidential and other leadership search Committees. John and Suzanne established and have provided ongoing support for

an endowment fund to support recruitment of North American rabbinical and cantorial students (which has now reached \$1 million). They also endowed and have provided ongoing support (which has now reached \$1 million) for the Golden Family Hanassi Fellows Program, bringing Israeli rabbinical students to intern in North American Reform congregations. Since 2012, there have been 28 Golden Family Hanassi Fellows who have spent 110 weeks at 28 U.S. Reform congregations, guided by 81 American rabbinical, cantorial, and education alumni mentors.

Suzanne Golden said, "I am thrilled to recognize all that HUC-JIR does to make the study and practice of Judaism a joyful and powerful experience. Its rabbis, cantors, and





educators have exponentially added meaning to our lives and have provided our family with a Jewish tradition that embraces the past and carries us into the future.”

In his remarks, John Golden cited the many rabbinical alumni who have shaped his life and said, “We are proud of our ongoing gifts to continue to support the recruitment of rabbinical students.” Regarding the inspiration by his Israeli family members to create the Golden Family Hanassi Fellows Program, he noted that “not only do Americans often know little about Israelis, but many Israelis often really don’t know Americans and are especially baffled by Reform or Progressive Judaism as religion in Israel is too often presented as secular or Orthodox.” He concluded that “HUC-JIR is both central and indispensable to the health and continuing growth and vitality of progressive Judaism, both here and in Israel and throughout the world.”

The Golden family are members of Congregation Emanu-El of the City of New York and Temple Adas Israel in Sag Harbor, NY, where John is co-chairing their current capital campaign. The Golden family also support the WUPJ Nestor summer camps for young Reform Jews in the Former Soviet Union.

John is a retired partner of Goldman Sachs and maintains his own private direct investment organization. He is the former Chair of the Board of Trustees of Colgate University. Suzanne is a Board member and former Vice Chair of the Board of the Brain & Behavior Research Foundation, which funds grants for basic research in mental health issues. Suzanne was a founder of Suzanne Golden Associates, a pioneer in law firm outplacement, and of Suzanne Golden Antiques. The Golden family are the parents of two daughters who, with their husbands, have bestowed six wonderful grandchildren on Suzanne and John.

The Benefit Chairs were Michele and Marty Cohen, Pam and Larry Tarica, and Bonnie and Daniel Tisch. The HUC-JIR Alumni Chairs were Rabbi Joshua M. Davidson '97 and Cantor Mia Fram Davidson '07, Rabbi David Ellenson '77 and Rabbi Jacqueline Koch Ellenson '83, and Rabbi Daniel Geffen '14, MAJE '12 and LuAnne Geffen, MAJE '08, MAJNM '12.

→ Watch the dinner video:
huc.edu/2019-benefit-video



“HUC-JIR is both central and indispensable to the health and continuing growth and vitality of progressive Judaism, both here and in Israel and throughout the world.” — John Golden

Left: Three generations of the Golden Family: (from left) Michael Kelter, Katharine Kelter, John Golden, Jennifer Kelter, Suzanne Golden, Emily Oren; **Above:** Faculty, alumni, and students of the Debbie Friedman School of Sacred Music performing “Celebration in Song” at the dinner: (from left) Cantor Joshua Breitzer '11, faculty; Merri Lovinger Arian, faculty; Robert Wittner '20; Sam Rosen '22; Ilana Goldman '21; Cantor Jill Abramson '02, Program Associate; Shani Ben-Or '21; Cantor Richard Cohn, Director; and Cantor Benjie Ellen Schiller '87, Professor of Cantorial Arts. **Middle:** President Rehfeld with Suzanne and John Golden; **Below (from left):** Presentation to Suzanne and John Golden by Marty Cohen, member of HUC-JIR Board of Governors and Benefit Chair, and Rabbi David Ellenson '77, Ph.D., Chancellor Emeritus and Benefit Alumni Chair.

SUSTAINING THE LEGACY OF LEADERSHIP AND ADVANCING ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

THE RABBI AARON D. PANKEN

The legacy of leadership exemplified by Rabbi Aaron D. Panken '91, Ph.D., z"l, HUC-JIR President (2014 - 2018), will be sustained in perpetuity with the creation of four Rabbi Aaron D. Panken Professorships, one on each of HUC-JIR's campuses in Cincinnati, Jerusalem, Los Angeles, and New York.



Jennifer Grayson, Ph.D., Rabbi Aaron D. Panken Assistant Professor of History at HUC-JIR/ Cincinnati with a joint appointment at Xavier University, holds a Ph.D. in History from The Johns Hopkins University (2017) and a M.Phil. in Middle Eastern Studies from the University of Cambridge (2013). A promising scholar, she researches Arabic speaking Jewish communities in the medieval Islamic world. Her current book project traces changes in the relationship between Jewish government officials, the Babylonian geonim (leaders of the two major Babylonian yeshivas), and the Abbasid Caliphate in Baghdad between the tenth and twelfth centuries.

Lecture → huc.edu/panken-grayson



Rabbi Dalia Marx '02, Ph.D., Rabbi Aaron D. Panken Professor of Liturgy and Midrash at the Taube Family Campus in Jerusalem, received her doctorate from the Hebrew University in Jerusalem and was ordained at HUC-JIR in 2002. A tenth-generation Jerusalemite, her most recent book is *About Time: Journeys in the Jewish-Israeli Calendar*. She is co-editor of the new Israeli Reform Movement prayer book, author of *When I Sleep and When I Wake: On Prayers between Dusk and Dawn* and *A Feminist Commentary of the Babylonian Talmud*, and a regular contributor to 929, adding a Reform feminist voice to this online Israeli Bible commentary.

Lecture → huc.edu/panken-marx

PROFESSORSHIPS



Lisa Messinger

Over \$13 million has been contributed by over 1,000 of HUC-JIR's lay leaders, alumni, congregations, faculty, staff, students, family, and friends to endow the Rabbi Aaron D. Panken Professorships in a campaign spearheaded by Rabbi Panken's beloved wife, Lisa Messinger, and the Messinger Panken family. The campaign culminated with lectures by each of the four Panken Professors, as they were inaugurated to their named positions on their respective campuses.

President Rehfeld said, "The Panken Professorships honor Rabbi Panken's profound impact on this institution, its students, and the Reform Movement. Rabbi Panken prized our faculty as scholars, thought leaders, teachers, and mentors who transmit the chain of tradition. He inspired our students to become transformative leaders, invigorating Jewish life and strengthening the Jewish public sphere in communities throughout North America, Israel, and around the world. Any success we enjoy in the future will be built upon his leadership. We are enormously grateful to Lisa Messinger for her efforts in promoting and securing the Panken Professorships and, beyond that, what she has done and continues to do to strengthen our College-Institute."

Lisa Messinger offered these words, "HUC-JIR was Aaron's second home and so it is especially moving that this extraordinary institution decided to honor Aaron's legacy through this campaign. This endowment recognizes the fundamental necessity of

memorable, world-class teachers, who Aaron prioritized as President and felt the power of while an HUC-JIR student himself. Aaron's memory and legacy will endure in the people he cared most about: our young Jewish visionaries of the next decades, and the teachers who are so essential to inspiring them."

The inaugural cohort of Panken Professors have been carefully selected and the designated faculty members and their disciplines best reflect the values that made Rabbi Panken a singular leader for HUC-JIR and the Reform Movement. They represent both emerging scholars at the outset of promising careers and accomplished members of HUC-JIR's renowned faculty, all of whom are committed to serious scholarship and animated by a love of teaching and a commitment to the nurturing of Reform Jewish leaders.

"The Panken Professors, inspired by Rabbi Panken's legacy, will increase the light of Jewish studies and enhance HUC-JIR's standing as a global center of innovation for Jewish life and learning," noted Rabbi Andrea Weiss, Ph.D., Jack, Joseph and Morton Mandel Provost.

Sue Hochberg, Chair of the HUC-JIR Board of Governors, stated, "Rabbi Aaron Panken's memory will continue to inspire the College-Institute's sacred mission of preparing the next generations of leaders for the Jewish people worldwide."



Rabbi Joseph A. Skloot '10, Ph.D.,

Rabbi Aaron D. Panken Assistant Professor of Modern Jewish Intellectual History at HUC-JIR/New York, received his doctorate at Columbia University (2017) and was ordained at HUC-JIR in 2010. A warm and engaging teacher and mentor, his dissertation on "Printing, Hebrew Book Culture and *Sefer Hasidim*" explores the effects of printing on Hebrew texts during the sixteenth century. Before coming to the College-Institute, he served as Associate Rabbi at Washington Hebrew Congregation in Washington, D.C. (Photographed with his wife, Rabbi Erin Glazer '09)

Lecture → huc.edu/panken-skloot



Rabbi Dvora E. Weisberg '11, Ph.D.,

Rabbi Aaron D. Panken Professor of Rabbinics and Director of the School of Rabbinical Studies at the Jack H. Skirball Campus in Los Angeles, received her doctorate in Talmud and Rabbinic Literature from the Jewish Theological Seminary and was ordained at HUC-JIR in 2011. A beloved teacher and skilled administrator, she is the author of *Levirate Marriage and the Family in Ancient Judaism* (University Press of New England/ Brandeis University Press, 2009) and the forthcoming volume, *Menahot/A Feminist Commentary on the Babylonian Talmud* (Mohr Siebeck).

Lecture → huc.edu/panken-weisberg

STUDENTS, FACULTY, A



HONORING VETERANS

Third-year rabbinical student, Jewish Foundation of Cincinnati Fellow, and aspiring Navy chaplain **Randall "Rand" Burke** interviewed residents from the assisted living section at Cedar Village, an eldercare facility in Mason, OH, for a publication paying tribute to their service. He participated in a special

community ceremony honoring the eighteen veterans – sixteen from the U.S. military and two from the Israeli armed forces. "These individuals, by their actions and courage, changed the course of history to preserve and protect the freedom that we benefit from today."

"THE DAUGHTERS OF RASHI"

Rabbi Tamara Cohn Eskenazi '13, Ph.D., Effie Wise Ochs Professor of Biblical Literature and History, participated in the First World Congress of "The Daughters of Rashi," a gathering of women scholars and Reform, Orthodox, and Conservative rabbis, held in Rashi's home and synagogue in Troyes, France. "I will never forget standing in front of the bimah in Rashi's house, beholding a sea of learned women wrapped in their tallit, praying together and spontaneously dancing around the Torah." The two-day program included sessions on the Bible, Talmud, Midrash, Halachah, and Spirituality, team taught by scholars and rabbis.



From left: Pioneering liberal Rabbi Pauline Bebe, Rabbi Tamara Cohn Eskenazi '13, Ph.D., and Dr. Joelle Bernheim in Rashi's synagogue in Troyes, France.



participating in a cooking class, improvisational theater, Israeli dance (pictured here wearing traditional costumes), and a session with Israeli singer Odeleya Berlin. This successful program will be repeated next summer during the week of June 29, 2020. → [Read more: huc.edu/ivrit-byachad-2019](https://huc.edu/ivrit-byachad-2019)

IVRIT B'YACHAD

Eighteen alumni – rabbis, cantors, educators, and nonprofit executives from classes ranging from 1978 to 2018 – participated in the inaugural *Ivrit B'yachad* Alumni Ulpan at the Taube Family Campus in Jerusalem, a new initiative to enhance Hebrew language learning for Reform professional leaders. Participants in this five-day immersive, interactive Hebrew experience strengthened their Hebrew skills with beloved HUC-JIR teachers Dr. Yossi Leshem and Rivki Rosner and studied classical Jewish texts and contemporary Israel with Rabbi Michael Marmor '92, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Jewish Theology; Dr. Ruhama Weiss, Director, Blaustein Center for Pastoral Counseling; and Rabbi Talia Avnon-Benveniste '09, Director, Israel Rabbinical Program. Alumni also practiced their Hebrew by exploring Jerusalem neighborhoods, praying each morning with Israeli rabbinical students, and

STRENGTHENING REFORM JEWISH LIFE ON COLLEGE CAMPUSES

A Central Synagogue--Hillel--HUC-JIR partnership, made possible by a multi-year grant from Central Synagogue's Rabbi Peter J. Rubinstein Fund for the Renaissance of Reform Judaism, has made possible the placement of two HUC-JIR graduates as new Reform Senior Jewish Educators at campus Hillels this year: Rabbi Alexander Kress '17 at UCLA Hillel and Rabbi Evan Sheinhait '19 at Brandeis Hillel. As Reform Senior Jewish Educators these rabbis will build personal relationships with hundreds of students, serve as role models, and strengthen the presence of Reform Jewish life on college campuses. This partnership also supports the placement of several HUC-JIR students as Hillel Interns: Sam Stern '21 at USC, Rob Gleiser '20 for the second year at Ohio State University, and Nora Feinstein '20 at Princeton.

AND ALUMNI IN ACTION

→ Read more: huc.edu/faculty2018-19

ADVANCING JEWISH-MUSLIM UNDERSTANDING

Rabbi Reuven Firestone '82, Ph.D., Regenstein Professor in Medieval Judaism and Islam, participated in the "*Hilf al-Fudul* 'Alliance of Virtues': An Opportunity for Global Peace" in Abu Dhabi, U.A.E., organized by the Forum for Promoting Peace in Muslim Societies and attended by the leading peace and freedom activists in the Muslim world. "I gave a keynote at the opening session – the first time a Jewish scholar was invited to give the opening talk – which was a well-received and honest appraisal of tribalism, identity politics, and the controversy regarding the treatment of Jews under Muslim rule."

→ Read the address: huc.edu/firestone-abudhabi

Rabbi Reuven Firestone '82, Ph.D. (at right) with Muslim clergy and scholars at a conference in Doha, Qatar.



"EL PASO STRONG"

Rabbi Ben Zeidman '10 of Temple Mount Sinai in El Paso, TX, a 400-member congregation welcoming many Latino-Jewish and interfaith families, helped organize an interfaith vigil the night after the mass shooting at a Walmart store on August 3, 2019. He expresses thanks to all who reached out to him in the aftermath and contributed to the congregation's Tikkun Olam Fund to support the victims' families and those injured. "It has shaken our community, but it has also revealed how strong the foundations of our community already were. 'El Paso Strong' was already a saying, but it has become a mantra."

From left: Rabbi Ben Zeidman '10 and Rabbi Scott Rosenberg speak at the interfaith vigil with Msgr. Arturo Banuelas following the mass shootings.



HONORING RABBI DAVID ELLENSON '77, PH.D.

Nearly 300 alumni and other donors raised over \$50,000 in one day to honor their teacher and friend, Rabbi David Ellenson '77, Ph.D., with a scholarship in his name in gratitude for his supportive leadership as Interim President following the death of President Rabbi Aaron D. Panken '91, Ph.D., z"l. This scholarship ensures the important work of training the future change-makers and thought leaders of the Jewish community.

"BEAT SHAZAM"

Rabbi Andrew A. Goodman '08, New York Dean of Students and Assistant Director of Recruitment and Admissions, and Rabbi Joshua Strom '08 were on "Beat Shazam," the Fox game show modeled on "Name That Tune" hosted by Oscar and Grammy Award-winner Jamie Foxx. While they weren't allowed to mention their *alma mater* directly, they represented the modern rabbinate and HUC-JIR well on the show that aired on May 27. And they walked away with \$320,000!



PROGRAM NEWS

The **Rabbinical School** has engaged the HUC-JIR faculty and administration over the past two years in a substantive and inclusive process of curricular review focusing on three core ideas:

- an **integrated curriculum** that connects different areas of study by cutting across subject-matter lines and clinical experiences, emphasizing unifying concepts and key enduring questions;
- a curriculum that provides opportunities to develop **reflective practices** that will enhance their personal, spiritual, professional, and academic lives; and
- a curriculum that develops students' **versatile and creative leadership** capacity to create relationships and communities with low barriers to entry that provide deep experiences of Jewish life and learning while leading to a sense of meaning and belonging.

The **School of Education's** new **Master of Educational Leadership and Master of Arts in Jewish Learning**, with an updated course of study from the current Master's programs, will be launched in Fall 2020 and be based in Los Angeles and New York. Students will have the option of a three-year, dual-degree track with a first year in Israel (earning the additional Master of Arts in Jewish Learning), or a two-year stateside track earning a single degree, Master of Educational Leadership. The centerpiece of the new Master's degree is a two-year paid, part-time graduate residency in selected Jewish educational institutions with expert mentorship and supervision that offer students meaningful leadership experience, while experimenting with intrapreneurial educational design and change management.

→ [Read more: huc.edu/education](http://huc.edu/education)



Education students at a pro-immigration rally.

Twenty-two faculty members and alumni of the **Debbie Friedman School of Sacred Music** were presenters, prayer leaders, and concert artists in the forefront of a groundbreaking conference, *Hallel v'Zimra: Jewish Liturgical Music, Present + Future*, which brought together cantors, scholars, composers, educators, performing artists, and affiliated specialists from throughout the Jewish world, from Renewal and Orthodox to contemporary and traditional.



Students at Tipheret Israel, Mumbai.

Exploring Jewish India

Twenty rabbinical, cantorial, education, and Jewish nonprofit management students, including six JDC-Weitzman Fellows, traveled to India on a JDC-Entwine program. They visited a range of community and religious institutions and social welfare programs, met with leaders of the Mumbai and Cochin Jewish communities, and learned about JDC's vital services. Third-year education student Michelle Blumenthal reports, "Leaving India, I felt rejuvenated and inspired by the notion of *kol Yisrael aravim ze la ze*, that all Jews are responsible for one another. This Talmudic text has taken on a deeper meaning for me as a Jew and as a Jewish professional." The Weitzman-JDC Fellowship at HUC-JIR – founded by philanthropist and Jewish leader Jane Weitzman and her husband, Stuart Weitzman – is a two-year program offering rabbinical, cantorial, and Jewish education students opportunities to gain expertise in Jewish needs around the world and in Israel through a combination of tailored coursework and hands-on field experience.



Zelikow School students at Innovation Bootcamp.

The **Zelikow School of Jewish Nonprofit Management** launched the Master of Science in Organizational Leadership & Innovation program, which can be completed in residence at the Skirball Campus in Los Angeles during two consecutive summers, allowing mid-level professionals to advance their careers to the next level. → [Read more: huc.edu/zsjnm/ms](http://huc.edu/zsjnm/ms)

Symposium 2 - These Truths We Hold: Judaism in an Age of Truthiness, organized by Rabbi Joshua Garroway '03, Ph.D., Sol and Arlene Bronstein Professor of Judaeo-Christian Studies and Wendy Zierler, Ph.D., Sigmund Folk Professor of Modern Jewish Literature and Feminist Studies (at right), featured leading scholars and commentators on concepts of truth in the Bible and Talmud, liturgy, science, interfaith and pluralistic dialogue, and fake news, past, present, and future.

→ [Watch the videos: huc.edu/symposium-2videos](http://huc.edu/symposium-2videos)



FACULTY PROMOTIONS



Rabbi Joshua Garroway '03, Ph.D. has been named the Sol and Arlene Bronstein Professor of Judaeo-Christian Studies and promoted to full Professor of Early Christianity and Second Commonwealth.

Leah Hochman, Ph.D., has been promoted to Associate Professor of Jewish Thought with tenure.



Rabbi Haim Rechnitzer '03, Ph.D. has been promoted to the rank of Professor of Modern Jewish Thought.

APPOINTMENTS



Cantor Jill Abramson '02
Program Associate, Debbie Friedman School of Sacred Music



Rabbi Adam Allenberg '07, MAJE '05
Acting Director, National Office of Recruitment and Admissions



Lauren Applebaum, Ph.D.
Director of DeLeT



Judy Ashton
Manager of Outreach, Cincinnati



Paul Gish
Senior Director of Development Operations



Allison Glazer
Director of Marketing and Communications



Angele Osborne
Director of Donor Information Services



Amanda Sissman
Manager of National Programs and Operations for the School of Education

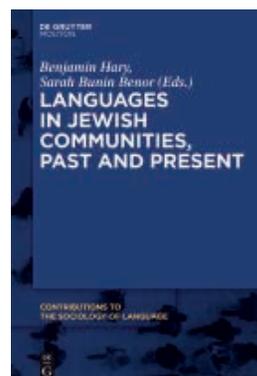


Walter Welch
Director of Facilities and Operations, Cincinnati

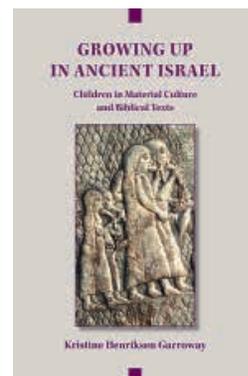


Serena Young
Senior Director of Philanthropic Leadership

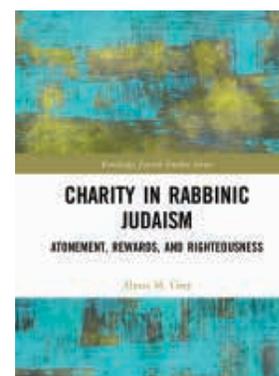
FACULTY BOOKS



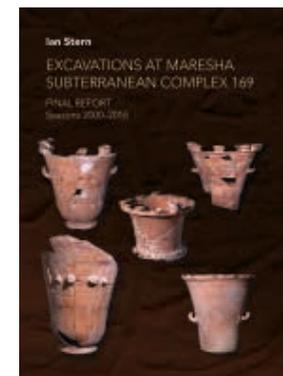
Sarah Bunin Benor, Ph.D.
Sociological and structural descriptions of language varieties used in over two dozen Jewish communities around the world. De Gruyter Mouton, 2018.



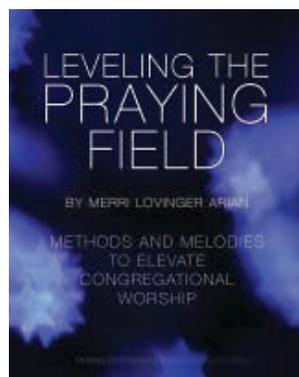
Kristine Garroway, Ph.D.
The first expansive reference examining the texts and material culture related to children in ancient Israel. Society of Biblical Literature, 2018.



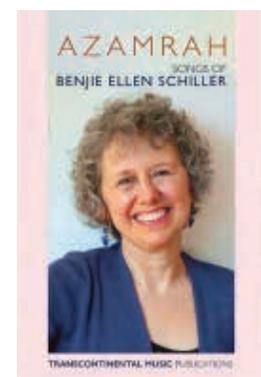
Alyssa Gray, Ph.D.
Studying the many ideas about how giving charity atones for sin and other rewards in late antique rabbinic literature. Routledge, 2019.



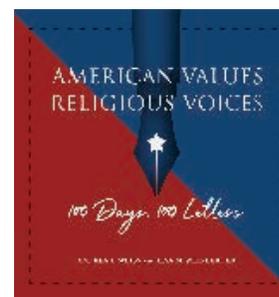
David Ilan, Ph.D., Editor
Report of HUC-JIR's excavations at Tel Maresha. Nelson Glueck School of Biblical Archaeology, 2019.



Merri Arian Lovinger
Offering insight into introducing new music within contemporary Jewish worship. Transcontinental, 2018.

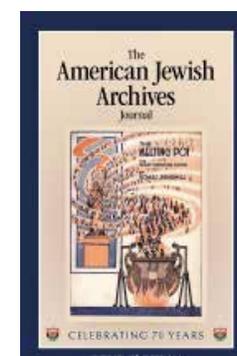


Cantor Benjie Ellen Schiller '87
Offering Jewish music for communal worship, life cycle, and concert use. Transcontinental, 2018.



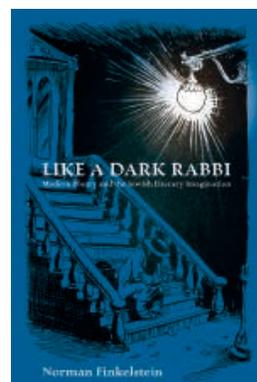
Rabbi Andrea Weiss '93, Ph.D.
Scholars from a diverse range of religious traditions articulate core American values that have grounded our nation in the past and should guide us forward. University of Cincinnati Press, 2018.

AMERICAN JEWISH ARCHIVES

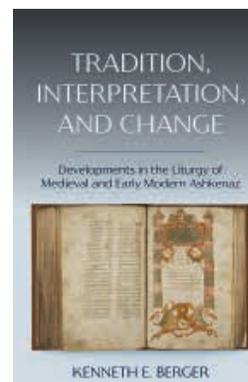


Gary P. Zola '82, Ph.D. '91 Editor; Dana Herman, Managing Editor
Essays on North American Jewish history and tributes to former HUC-JIR President Dr. Nelson Glueck. 2018.

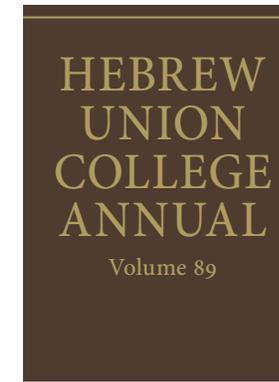
HUC PRESS



Norman Finkelstein
Exploring the tensions between religious and secular worldviews in recent Jewish poetry. 2019.

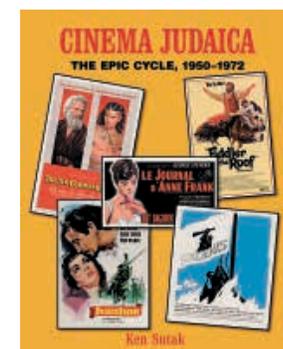


Kenneth E. Berger
Developments in the Ashkenazic rite, the liturgical rite of most of central and eastern European Jewry, from the eleventh century through the seventeenth. 2019.



Rabbi David H. Aaron '83, Ph.D., and Dr. Jason Kalman, Editors
Disseminating cutting-edge scholarship across the spectrum of Jewish Studies, including Bible, Rabbinics, Language and Literature, History, Philosophy, and Religion. 2018.

DR. BERNARD HELLER MUSEUM



Ken Sutak
Movie poster art illustrating Jewish heroines, heroes, and Biblical, Holocaust, and Israel history in post-war epic films. 2019.

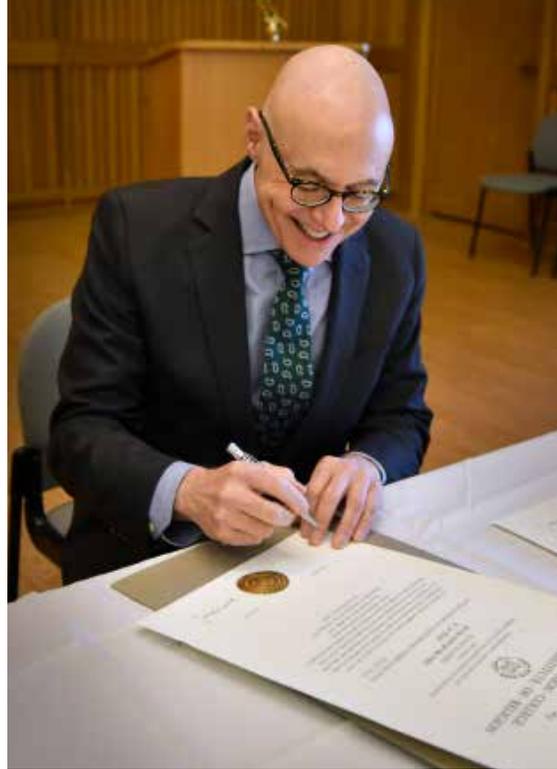
(Continued from page 3)

Some have said that there is no longer a unified American Jewish community, but rather a variety of different Jewish communities. What do you think?

This is something that really took up a lot my time as a Federation executive in St. Louis. I really think there are three authentic approaches to Jewish life: halachic, liberal, and secular. What I see in America is communities or camps that are increasingly intolerant of one another. For instance, I'm seeing creeping growing extremism among halachic Jews who are becoming less and less tolerant of a communal, broad approach to events and to the community. Pluralism has to be recognizing the authenticity of other forms of Judaism without having to necessarily agree with them.

The growing rift between American Judaism and Israeli Judaism can be attributed in large part to the marginalization — and even delegitimization — of liberal Judaism by the Israeli religious establishment and political leadership. For instance, Israeli Education Minister Rabbi Ra Peretz recently stated that intermarriage among American Jews is “like a second Holocaust.” But do you think American liberal Judaism bears any blame for the rift, as well?

I think [Peretz's statement] was terrible... I have already said that the Minister's comments are outrageous and I was very happy to see him take them back in a letter to Jewish Agency Chairman [Isaac] “Bougie” Herzog. Peretz apologized, and I accept that apology. But it does not fit with the tenor of this intolerance. It doesn't build Jewish peoplehood. The problem is the concentration of political power in religious authority. It's not the state of Israel, and it's certainly not Israelis. I don't think about it in terms of blaming one side of the other. It's not like Israel did something and now American Jews are upset. I think this is a very specific institutional piece. As long as you are going to back a very specific Judaism with political power, you are going to alienate folks who don't share that [kind of Judaism]. Maybe it is a failure of liberal Judaism to really explain [to Israelis] what it is — what



is the authenticity of liberal Judaism, not simply for us in America, but as an authentic form of Jewish life. I think change has begun with the work being done by our Israeli rabbis and when you look at the 45 congregations that are building vibrant Reform communities here in Israel.

Israel is an ethnocentric nation state moving increasingly to the right. How can young liberal American Jews raised to value the universal over the particular be convinced to care about Israel?

I think it's an absolute false dichotomy to say that you favor universalism over particularism. I don't think you can get to universalism or cosmopolitanism, or any of the global values, without going through particularism of a certain kind. Particularism is a means to achieving the universal. Even though the universal is what we

are aiming at — the good, the right, and the just — you can't get there without particularism. Starting where you are as somebody that has an identity as Jewish, that is connected historically, is the most effective psychological way to develop the kind of particularism that will lead to universalism. I didn't say it was going to be easy. If you walk away because of a challenge, then shame on you. You're cowardly... Where I feel very upset is when I see Jews in the U.S. who see what is happening here to the Palestinians and see the discrimination and the growing racism here, and simply say, “I'm done with Israel.” You're going to abandon your Jewish life that connects you to people here who are doing injustice to others? That's a rejection of pursuing universal values. You have a connection to the Jewish people and to Israel that gives you a leverage that could actually help effect change for the Palestinians and the Jewish community here in Israel because you're Jewish. That's particularism in service of the universal.

How can rabbis get American Jews constructively engaged with Israel?

I do think there does seem to be a need for rabbis to be in the mode of teachers about Israel, rather than either preach or be quiet. You can teach. You can present this side and that side and have people engage and ask the hard questions about it.

[Excerpted with permission from *The Times of Israel*, August 9, 2019]



Top: Signing diplomas, Cincinnati.

Right: With students at the New York Kallah.

On View

Rosh Hashanah Greetings

Klau Library/Cincinnati

Through November 15, 2019

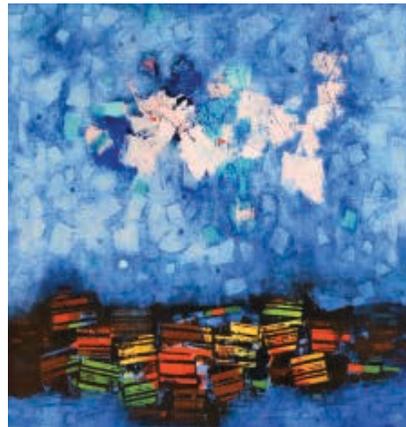


Ms 311, 14th century, Italian rite.

Modern Israeli Art: Recent Gifts from Nancy Berman and Alan Bloch

Skirball Museum/Cincinnati

Through January 5, 2020



Mordecai Ardon, *To the Morning Star*, 1973.
Gift of Nancy M. Berman and Alan J. Bloch.

The Jerusalem Biennale

Taube Family Campus/Jerusalem

Through November 28, 2019

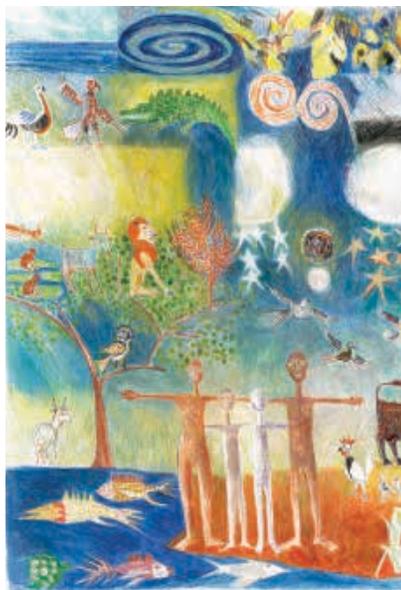


Tamara Moyzes and Shlomi Yaffe, *Polish Burekas*, 2014.

Avner Moriah: The Five Books of Moses

Dr. Bernard Heller Museum/New York

Through December 30, 2019



Gift from Sheila and Bill Lambert in memory of Rabbi Aaron Panken, Ph.D., and Rabbi Dr. David Posner.

Avner Moriah, *Genesis, Chapter 1: Creation*, 2007.

Relative Relations

Dr. Bernard Heller Museum/New York

Through June 30, 2020



Barbara Hines, *Spotlight on Joseph*, c. 2018.

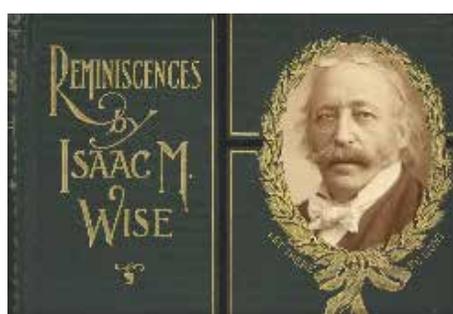
The HUC-JIR Nelson Glueck School of Biblical Archaeology Rescue Excavation at Tel Bet Shemesh

Bible Lands Museum/Jerusalem

Watch the video: huc.edu/excavation-tel-bet-shemesh



Aerial view of Bet Shemesh.



Rabbi Isaac Mayer Wise: An American Dreamer

American Jewish Archives/
Cincinnati

Through June 30, 2020

Watch the video:

huc.edu/aja-an-american-original

Reminiscences by Isaac M. Wise.

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Matthew Louchheim, Member, HUC-JIR Board of Governors, and Treasurer, Louchheim Foundation (right), and third-year rabbinical student Scott Goldberg.



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