FROM TEMPLE TO TEXT:
RABBINIC JUDAISM
AS DEFAULT OR DESTINY

Annual Ivan Meyer Lecture in Jewish Law
THE CENTER FOR JEWISH LAW AND CONTEMPORARY CIVILIZATION
DR. ISAIAH M. GAFNI is the Sol Rosenbloom Professor of Jewish History at The Hebrew University of Jerusalem. Dr. Gafni was born in New York City and moved to Israel in 1958, where he received his professional training. Dr. Gafni has taught at Hebrew University for 40 years, while also serving as visiting professor at numerous universities, including Harvard, Yale and Brown. He was also honored as the Louis Jacobs Fellow in Rabbinic Thought at Oxford University, where he delivered a series of lectures on the Jewish Diaspora in the Greco-Roman period. He has written extensively on a broad range of topics relating to the social, religious and cultural history of the Jews in late antiquity, with a particular stress on aspects of Jewish self-identity and relations with other ethnic and religious communities. His publications include The Jews of Babylonia in the Talmudic Era: A Social and Cultural History, for which he was awarded the 1992 Holon Prize in Jewish Studies; Babylonian Jewry and Its Institutions in the Period of the Talmud; and Land, Center and Diaspora: Jewish Constructs in Late Antiquity.

The Yeshiva University Center for Jewish Law and Contemporary Civilization at Cardozo School of Law brings together scholars of varied legal traditions and fields, creating a cross-cultural and cross-disciplinary dialogue that contributes a distinctively Jewish legal perspective on issues in law and culture. CJL sponsors a wide range of academic activities, including an innovative curriculum in Jewish law and legal theory, workshops, colloquia and conferences, as well as programs designed to support students and emerging scholars.

The late Dr. Ivan Isaak Meyer, who practiced law in Germany and New York City, was a generous supporter of Jewish education in the New York area. In 2004, the Ivan Meyer Visiting Scholar in Comparative Jewish Law was established at Cardozo School of Law.