

## University of Haifa

The Senate of the University of Haifa, by virtue of the authority vested in it by the constitution of the University and in accordance with the recommendations of the President and the Executive Committee

hereby confers upon

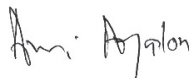
**Robert (Uri) Alter**

the degree of

**Doctor of Philosophy, Honoris Causa**

In recognition of his extraordinary achievements in the study of comparative literature in general, and in study and translating of Hebrew literature in particular, achievements that exemplify creativity and an endless desire for knowledge; for his decisive contribution to transforming Hebrew literature into literature that widely enjoys worldwide recognition, thanks to his academic research which always draws on his love of the Hebrew text; on his outstanding achievement of translating the Hebrew Bible into English, enabling billions of people around the world access to texts that constitute the cultural heritage of the people of Israel.

Conferred in 15 Sivan 5775/June 2, 2015  
Haifa, Israel



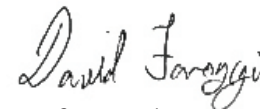
**Ami Ayalon**

Chairman of the Executive Committee



**Amos Shapira**

President



**Prof. David Faraggi**

Rector



## PROFESSOR ROBERT (URI) ALTER

Professor of Comparative Literature, Robert Alter was born in New York in 1935. He has focused his research on the European and American novel and on Hebrew literature from the Hebrew Bible – the Tanakh – through to modern Israeli literature.

Alter graduated from Columbia University with a BA in English Literature in 1957, and then went on to study Comparative Literature at Harvard University, where he completed his MA and Ph.D. degrees, the latter in 1962. He began his academic career immediately after his studies and, in 1969, was appointed Professor of Hebrew Literature and Comparative Literature at the University of California, Berkeley, where he teaches and researches to this day.

Professor Alter is one of the most prominent names in the study of comparative literature, having published (alone or with co-authors), 26 books and about 200 articles. He is a fellow of the American Academy of Sciences, the American Philosophical Society, the Library of Congress Scholars Council, the American Academy for Jewish Research, and many more.

Prof. Alter has devoted a considerable amount of his time over the years to research into Hebrew Literature. His earliest articles, published at the start of the 1960s, were devoted to analysis of the writings of S.Y. Agnon and Yizhar Smilansky (S. Yizhar). He later researched and analyzed Hebrew Literature in all its shades and forms, from the Tanakh, via Chaim Nahman Bialik and Shaul Tchernikovsky, and through to Yehuda Amichai.

There is no doubt, however, that his most challenging research, and perhaps his most impressive accomplishment of all, is his translation into English of the Tanakh, including its commentary and research comments. This epic endeavor, which has been in process for more than 20 years, is now in its final stages, and completion of the entire body of work is anticipated in the next two to three years.

Both the extent and the success of Alter's life work have contributed significantly to the dissemination of Hebrew literature and to the recognition of its importance around the world. He has done so with a great love of the Hebrew text, and out of a strong sense of mission.

In recognition of his research achievements, Professor Alter has won many awards including, in 1982, the National Jewish Book Award for Jewish Thought for *The Art of Biblical Narrative*, as well as the prestigious Robert Kirsch Award for Lifetime Contribution to American Letters, for his ongoing translation of the Tanakh (2009). "He is one of the most informed living scholars on of the Tanakh in terms of research and translation", Jonathan Kirsch said of Professor Alter when presenting him with the prize.