



November 13, 2022

Dear ICS members,

It is with deep sadness announcing that Prof. Amitai E. Halevi of the Technion Schulich Faculty of Chemistry passed away on November 10, 2022. The funeral will occur today, November 13, in the Neve Yam cemetery.

הוועד המנהל
Executive Board

ד"ר רבקה וייזר-ביטון
Dr. Rivka Weiser Biton

ד"ר דורית טייטלבוים
Dr. Dorit Taitelbaum

פרופי חיים כהן
Prof. Haim Cohen

פרופ' מיכאל מייילר
Prof. Michael Meijler

פרופי דוד מרגוליס
Prof. David Margulies

מר גדעון סילברמן
Mr. Gideon Silberman

ד"ר סיגל ספיר
Dr. Sigal Saphier

פרופי שרון רוטשטיין
Prof. Sharon Ruthstein

פרופי מיטל רכס
Prof. Meital Reches

פרופי דורון שבת
Prof. Doron Shabat

ד"ר אלעד שבתאי
Dr. Elad Shabtai

נובר
Treasurer

פרופ' צ'רלס דיינדרוק
Prof. Charles Diesendruck

ועדת ביקורת
Audit Committee

פרופי מאיה בר-סדן
Prof. Maya Bar Sadan

פרופי מיכה פרידמן
Prof. Micha Fridman



Prof. Amitai E. Halevi (1922 – 2022)

The fascinating biography of Prof. Halevi (born in New York in 1922) includes service in the U.S. Air Force during WWII, violin practice, service in the Hagana, production of explosives and detonators for the IDF and Ta'as, Talmud studies, and much more. He received his B.A. from the University of Cincinnati, M.Sc. from the Hebrew University, and Ph.D. (1952, with Christopher Ingold) from University College London. He joined the Hebrew University (1952) but moved to the Technion (1955) upon request from David Ginsburg, became Professor in 1964, and Professor Emeritus in 1990. Prof. Halevi is most known for his experimental and computational studies of isotope effects on molecular properties, equilibria, and kinetics; and the dependence of reaction mechanisms on state-, orbital- and spin-symmetry. His collaborative research took him to Cornell University, ETH Zürich, Brookhaven National Laboratory, Oregon State University, Univ. of Oregon, Argonne National Laboratory, Purdue University, Weizmann Institute, Univ. College London, UC Irvine, Ben-Gurion University, MPI Mülheim/Ruhr, University of Munich, University of Frankfurt, Univ. of Heidelberg, University of Graz, Univ. of Paris, Clarkson University, CalTech, MPI Heidelberg, Simon Frazer University, and the Univ. of Wisconsin. At his last years, he still published single-authored research papers, some of which challenged well-established theories, such as the Woodward-Hoffmann rules and Perrin's theory concerning isotope effects on acidity. In 2015 Amitai became an Honorable Member of the Israel Chemical Society for his long scientific leadership in the field of Physical and Theoretical Organic Chemistry and his significant contributions to higher education in the State of Israel.

As Dean of the Faculty of Chemistry (1983-85), Prof. Halevi steered the Faculty over the turbulent waters of those years. He influenced the Technion as a member of the Academic Development Committee, the Committee for Senior Faculty Appointments, and the Committee for Appointment of Research Professors. As president of the Disciplinary Tribunal for Academic Staff, he impacted ethical conduct. Via the Review Committee on Operations and Functions of the V.P. for Finance and Administration, he helped shape the Technion administration. He also acted as the Senate Representative in the Board of Governors, as a member of the Senate Steering Committee and the Committee for Election of the President, where he shaped the Technion management. As Dean of the Technion Graduate School (1969-71), he revolutionized and shifted the conceptual basis of the Ph.D. programs from applied to basic science. Amitai's autobiography, available soon on the ICS website, reveals a fascinating story of a highly gifted scientist.

On a personal level, all faculty members enjoyed Amitai's warm friendship and advice. He radiated a pleasant ambiance and good values across the campus at all levels, including faculty members, students, technical and administrative staff, and the entire higher education network in the State of Israel. He will be remembered with much respect and admiration as a prominent scientist and a broad-scope intellectual who translated English poetry to Hebrew and Hebrew poems to English.

The ICS and the entire community of Israeli scientists mourn the loss of a great scientist.