

## Israel Academy Welcomes Six New Members

The Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities was founded in 1960 to advise the Israeli government on scientific matters and to promote Israeli excellence in scholarship. Its seventy members are recognized, world-class experts in their fields and command considerable respect within the Israeli and international scientific communities. As the Academy's President, Prof. Jacob Ziv, observed, "Although I can't say with full assurance that all leading Israeli scientists are members of the Academy, I can say with assurance that all Academy members are truly leading scientists." The induction of six new members into the Academy on December 28, 2000, was thus a gala occasion, well attended by the scientific community.

Prof. Ada Yonath, 61, is one of only four women members of the Academy. Although Israeli women students now enjoy full parity in higher education, it will take 30-35 years for this to be reflected in the lifetime career contributions required for Academy membership. Born in pre-State Israel, in Jerusalem, she received her academic degrees from the Hebrew University and the Weizmann Institute. She is world renowned for her discoveries about ribosomes, the cell's microscopic "protein factories," which use the genetically coded information carried by messenger-RNA molecules to construct functioning proteins. As President Ziv proudly noted, "If there is a short list for future Nobel Prizes, I am sure that Prof. Yonath is on it." She currently conducts her research at the Weizmann Institute's Department of Structural Biology.

Prof. Zvi Ben-Avraham, 59, of Tel Aviv University's Department of Geophysics and Planetary Sciences, was born in Kibbutz Ramat Rachel. He studied at the Hebrew University and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and developed geodynamic models for processing information about large, complicated geological regions. He also developed a new theory on how continents grow and how oceans are formed.

Prof. Avram Hershko, 63, a researcher and teacher at the Technion in Haifa, recently shared the prestigious Albert Lasker Prize for medical research. Born in Hungary, he settled in Israel 50 years ago, and served as an Israel Defense Forces physician during the Six Day War. He is known for his discoveries on the way proteins break down inside living cells.

Prof. Yehuda Bauer, 74, of the Hebrew University's Institute for Contemporary Jewry, came here with his parents from Prague in 1939. A leading expert on the Holocaust and anti-Semitism, he received the prestigious Israel Prize two years ago.



*Four of the Israel Academy's newest members at a reception at the official residence of Israel's President, Moshe Katsav. Left to right: Prof. Zvi Ben-Avraham, Prof. Ada Yonath, Prof. Gershon Shaked and Prof. Ariel Shisha-Halevy.*

Prof. Gershon Shaked, 71, of the Hebrew University, was born in Vienna and immigrated to Israel in 1939. He is a leading expert in modern Hebrew literature and a recipient of the Israel Prize.

Prof. Ariel Shisha-Halevy of the Hebrew University is a linguistic expert who has specialized in the ancient Egyptian language and in Coptic studies. Born in Haifa, he received his degrees at the Hebrew University.

Four of the recipients celebrated their appointments, which are for life, by delivering inaugural lectures on their research.