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ARYEH LEVIN: A SCHOLARLY BIOGRAPHY

Aryeh Levin was born in 1937 in Ramat Gan, in mandatory Palestine. He spent his first years in the village of Gat Rimon, near Petah Tikva, where his parents, Batya and Yehuda Levin, worked in the citrus industry. When Aryeh was five years old, the family moved to Tel Aviv; his parents could no longer make a living in the citrus industry because of the economic crisis caused by World War II. His father became a bus driver. Aryeh started his schooling in the Bialik Elementary School in Tel Aviv; he fondly remembers this school as a place which inculcated in him the love of learning despite the difficult conditions and the huge size of his class which included 56 pupils. He also remembers the efforts of his parents who did all they could to provide him with books and other necessities for his studies, regardless of the difficult economic conditions which they had to face.

Aryeh began to study Arabic in 1951 when he enrolled in the Municipal High School in Tel Aviv. During the first two years he studied literary Arabic with Dov Iron, who was at that time one of the best teachers of Arabic in the country. Between 1953 and 1955 he studied literary and colloquial Arabic with another excellent teacher, Avraham Lavi.

Having completed his military service in 1957, Aryeh started his undergraduate studies at the Hebrew University in the departments of Arabic Language and Literature and the History of the Middle East in Modern Times. He continued his M.A. studies in the Department of Arabic. Aryeh had the great good fortune to be a student of the university at a time when Arabic studies flourished at a level which has not been equalled since. When Aryeh was an undergraduate and a doctoral student, the Hebrew University offered a greater degree of expertise and a wider variety courses in Arabic studies than anywhere else in the world. Aryeh was able to take full advantage of the riches available during this golden period in Jerusalem. He studied with Professors David Zvi Baneth, Haim Blanc, Joshua Blau, Meir Jacob Kister, Moshe Piamenta, David Ayalon and Hans Jacob Polotsky. He feels deeply indebted to these great scholars and teachers as having had a profound impact on his academic career, his teaching and research.