

Mandel Scholion Interdisciplinary Research Center
in the Humanities and Jewish Studies

Annual Report 2019



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Table of Contents

ANNUAL REPORT 2019

Morton and Barbara Mandel: In Memoriam	4
Changing of the Guard	5

ANNUAL REPORT 2018-2019

Final Year of the "Materials for Changes" Research Group	10
"Historical Linguistics and Formal Semantics" Research Group	12
"In Someone Else's Shoes" Research Group	14

Mandel Fellows

Farewell from Dr. Rachel Wamsley	16
Farewell from Dr. Or Hasson	17
Farewell from Dr. Daniel Lav	18
Seminars	20
Publications	22

MANDEL SCHOLION 2019/2020

New Research Group "Setting Tables"	24
New Mandel Postdoctoral Fellows	25
Dr. Omer Michaelis	
Dr. Iyas Nasser	
Dr. Guy Ron-Gilboa	
Congratulations	26

Barbara and Morton Mandel: In Memoriam

The Mandel Scholion Research Center mourns the passing of Mr. Morton L. Mandel (1921-2019) and his wife Mrs. Barbara A. Mandel (1925-2019). Mrs. Mandel passed away a month after her husband this past fall. Mr. Mandel was the founder of the Morton, Jack and Joseph Mandel Foundation and Mrs. Mandel served as the Vice Chair of the foundation. Both were lovers of Israel, generous philanthropists and humanists. Mr. Mandel's vision allowed for the creation of our Center and of the stimulating intellectual environment that benefits the scholars and students in the Faculty of Humanities at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. We extend our condolences to their children and to their entire family and are forever grateful for the Mandels' gift, vision and belief in the Humanities.

Photo: Sasson Tiram



From the 1870s and 1970s to 2019

I am writing this opening piece for the newsletter on the eve of leaving the Mandel Scholion Center after three wonderful years (2006–2009) as a member of a research group and—after a three-year hiatus—another eight as its academic head. That invites some broader-than-usual reflection about what the Center is about. Moreover, I am writing, as it happens, on the thirtieth anniversary of the murder, in the first *intifada*, of my great teacher, Prof. Menahem Stern. Apart from memories, happy and sad, that also invites reflection about the way scholarship in the humanities is done, and, therefore, about the experiment this Center embodies.

When, in a review of the first volume of Stern's *Greek and Latin Authors on Jews and Judaism*, Fergus Millar proclaimed that Stern's work is "perhaps the finest expression in the twentieth century of what was best in the German scholarship of the nineteenth" (*Scripta Classica Israelica* 3 [1976/77]: 176), the Oxford scholar was referring to the fact that *GLAJJ* is a philological-historical corpus of texts. But he could also have been referring, just as well, to the conditions in which the book was produced: Stern wrote his magnum opus all by himself, on a little table in his home (and we all knew that he was not to be bothered about anything until the mid-afternoon); when he went to the library now and then to check this or that point, the result was a note in his pocket, which later, at home, was translated into the appropriate passage of his manuscript. That's what he did all week long, for decades, punctuating his work with occasional trips to the University for teaching and with meetings here and there. That model of Jerusalemite scholarship (memorialized so well in Joseph Cedar's "Footnote") too was characteristic of the nineteenth



Professor Daniel R. Schwartz

century; note, for example, an 1874 article in which one of the great medievalists of the time marveled at the ability of one of his colleagues to produce his books all by himself, depending, successfully, upon his own memory for all of the relevant details at all the stages of preparing his manuscripts (Th. Sickel, *Historische Zeitschrift* 32 [1874]: 353). And—to revert again to the 1970s—that was my own experience as well, when I wrote my doctoral dissertation: I wrote at home in more or less complete isolation from others, in the hours I could devote to my research and writing alongside of the job that allowed me to keep body and soul together.

And so things have remained. Writing in 1990, a Harvard dean of Arts and Sciences remarked on the "loneliness or isolation [that] is particularly strong for graduate students in the humanities [...] because cooperative research is discouraged, especially when writing a dissertation: that

is intended to be individual work to exhibit one's own capacities." As he commented, "Few experiences in our working life can be more isolating than gathering materials for a dissertation deep in the bowels of some large library. No one can help; no human voice is heard; the only constant is that very special smell of decaying books" (H. Rosovsky, *The University: An Owner's Manual* [1990], 153–154). The same could still be written today as well.

Rosovsky's lines were quoted, however, in the 2014 "Scholion at Ten" evaluation report, and indeed it is thoughts such as those that lie behind the Mandel Scholion Center. The Center, which opened in 2002, aims to contribute to the development of a new, cooperative, model of research in the humanities. By building research groups; by insisting that our fellows—of different fields and disciplines, generations, and stages of their careers—work side by side; and by affording them the conditions that make doing so possible and attractive, Scholion attempts to foster a context for research that will not only eliminate isolation but also fructify scholarly work by encouraging cross-disciplinary cooperation. Sometimes that happens in a planned and structured way, in the context of the interdisciplinary research groups. Sometimes, instead, it happens in a more happenstance way, when, for example, an historian and a psychologist happen to realize, in a chance conversation by the coffee machine or on a Center-wide fieldtrip, that they have common interests that can be pursued in ways that neither, hitherto, had any occasion to imagine, much less to pursue. That is especially likely to happen if, as the context at Scholion encourages, they are willing to think of their own work from another's point of view.

Looking forward to "Scholion at Twenty" in a few years, it will be interesting to know just how successful we have been in fostering this new model. There is, however, plenty of anecdotal evidence. Thus, for a recent example, at a center-wide seminar, Idit Ben Or, a doctoral student who is concluding her tenure here as a member of our 2016–2019 "Materials for Change" research group, whose work focuses on British coins of the 17th–19th centuries and whose training had oriented her toward the use of archives of written materials, pointed to the way archaeologists in her research group brought her to study her coins as real artifacts, in a way that otherwise would never have occurred to her, but which proved to be quite fruitful. It is interesting to know whether such experiences will bring her, and others who pass through the Center, to seek out such interdisciplinary cooperation in the future, and to imagine what its fruits will be. Indeed, in a Faculty in which it is still very common for professors to use their offices (and visit campus) only once or twice a week, when teaching, while otherwise they work at home or "deep in the bowels of some large library," it will be interesting to learn whether twenty years of Scholion alumni have made a significant impact on the working habits that characterize the Faculty—and what implications that has for our scholars and their students.

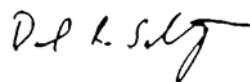
As a straw in the wind, I will also note, with satisfaction, that the Center has continued to maintain its reputation as a coveted venue for scholarship, which means that scholars are voting for this new model. As in recent years, the number of applicants for postdoctoral scholarships remained more than sixty times the number of scholarships we have to offer, with more than 60% of the applicants

coming from abroad. And if, in the past, three or four research groups applied for each available slot, this past year there were seven, among them several groups that included past fellows in the Center who, evidently, would be happy to come back for a second round. The process of evaluating all of these applications responsibly is quite a daunting one, one that mobilizes the assistance of 30–40 members of our Faculty, and while it is quite clear that, along the way, we perforce reject many worthy candidates (which is one of the most difficult burdens borne by our academic committee), it does seem that the postdocs and groups that are chosen are definitely worthy. This is easiest to document with regard to the postdocs, for whom the changes between before and after are most dramatic: suffice it to say that, as of this summer, 29 of the 34 past Mandel postdocs have been appointed to fulltime tenure-track positions. But concerning the doctoral students and senior scholars in the research groups as well, the high level of research activity here is quite salient—and is documented by a steady stream of publications and punctuated by steady streams of completed degrees, new research grants, and promotions.

The past year has been quite a lively one for the Mandel Scholion Center. As detailed elsewhere in this newsletter, we have had our regular complement of three research groups, but—thanks to scholarship funds left behind by fellows who departed early in order to take up academic positions—seven postdocs instead of the usual six; a three-day study trip instead of the traditional two-day trip; a new executive director, Yana Abramovich-Mahlin (see next page), who

replaced Keren Sagi after she, as her predecessors, moved up in the ranks of the HUJI bureaucracy; a new incoming academic head, Prof. Elisheva Baumgarten; a steady stream of short-term and middle-term guests from abroad; and, apart from our regular seminars and annual international conference, a good number of special activities, running from book launches for books produced in the Center, to special workshops sponsored by our Mandel postdocs and to a field-trip to the Hebrew Israelites' Watermelon Festival in Dimona, etc. Hopefully we have not strayed too far from a proper balance between letting our scholars be masters of their own time and do their work as they see fit, on the one hand, and supplying them with enriching opportunities to broaden their horizons and think outside of their respective boxes, on the other.

The past eight years have been, for me, an intense opportunity to help facilitate scholarship and the careers of young scholars, to work together with highly gifted and dedicated partners, and to help the Mandel Foundation in its efforts to help put the humanities in general, and our Faculty in particular, onto a stable and upward-bound trajectory. I am grateful, to the Foundation and to the University, for having entrusted me with this opportunity, and sure that, under the leadership of Prof. Elisheva Baumgarten, this trajectory will become even steeper and take the Center, and with it our Faculty of Humanities, to new heights.



Professor Daniel R. Schwartz



Prof. Elisheva Baumgarten

I am very excited to join the Scholion Mandel Research Center as the new director this coming fall. I come to Scholion from the Departments of Jewish History and History, where I teach medieval European history, focusing on the Jews of medieval northern Europe and their social and cultural history. My recent research is a collaborative project, *Beyond the Elite: Jewish Daily Life in Medieval Europe*, and I have very much enjoyed the experience of learning how to direct a research group made up of scholars of diverse academic backgrounds and at different stages of their careers. As a result, I find the Scholion environment of collaborative research a welcome challenge and am enthusiastic to join this vibrant academic center that has made its mark both within Israel and around the world over the past decades. I look forward to getting to know the members of the research groups, students and faculty, and the postdoctoral fellows at the Center, and am grateful for this opportunity to work in such a broad framework for research in the Humanities. I am especially honored to have been given the privilege to follow in the footsteps of Prof. Israel Yuval and Prof. Daniel Schwartz and learn from the ways they have conceived of and instituted the routine at Mandel Scholion.



Yana Abramovich-Mahlin

I am very excited and feel very proud to join the Scholion Mandel Research Center as its new executive director. I've come to Scholion from the School of Public Policy, where I was the coordinator of "Executive" programs for civil servants. I very much enjoy discovering what is for me a new academic world, and the opportunity to contribute to the work of Scholion's scholars and research groups. In June I organized a mini-workshop on communication and presentation for PhD students and postdocs in the Mandel School; feedback was very positive, so hopefully we will be able to go on holding such events in the coming year as well. I am happy to find in Scholion cooperation between academic staff and administrative staff, and look forward to the opportunity to be part of it.

Annual Report
2018/2019

Final Year of the "Materials for Change" Research Group

**Prof. Nir Avieli, Prof. Leore Grosman, Prof. Gideon Shelach, Prof. Rina Talgam
Idit Ben Or, Naomi Simhony, Tal Ulus, Elad Yaron, Timna Raz**

This was the last year of our group in Scholion and we tried to make the most of it.

In December we organized an international conference titled: ***Extra-Ordinary: Unique and Common Artifacts as Social Actors***. This was not an attempt to summarize all that we have done during our years in Scholion, but rather to focus on a specific theme through which we

could explore the ideas that our group discussed and developed. The focus of the conference was material culture; we focused on material culture through the lenses of an apparent dichotomy between the extraordinary and the mundane, and the ways in which artifacts participate in processes of social change. Ten international scholars, all from leading academic institutions in America, Europe and Asia, as well as



Materials for Change Research Group (2016-2019)

fourteen Israeli scholars (including the eight members of our research group) presented papers at this conference, which was well attended by students and professors. After the conference, our group selected some of the papers presented in it and we are now working on preparing them for publication.

In addition to the conference, our group also organized the yearly retreat of the Scholion program. It was a three day trip that focused on material aspects of the southern periphery of Israel, past and present. We stayed in Mizpe-Ramon and visited the Shivta archaeological

site, the Bahad 1 military base (where we observed the unique synagogue of the base), the unrecognized hidden Bedouin village of Wadi Aricha, and more. We met the residents of the area and talked with them about different aspects of the relations between the core and periphery of Israel, past and present.

During the year we continued our weekly meetings, which focused mainly on the research of the students in our group.



Final Group Excursion to Northern Israel

"Historical Linguistics and Formal Semantics" Research Group (2017-2020) _____

**Prof. Elitzur Bar-Asher Siegal, Dr. Nora Boneh, Dr. Eitan Grossman, Dr. Aynat Rubinstein
Noa Bassel, Kevin Grasso, Omri Meroz, Shira Tal
Hanan Moyal, Timna Raz**

This was our second year as a research group at Mandel Scholion. During the first year, we investigated foundational questions and methodologies in the two fields that we seek to integrate in our research and, more importantly, we reviewed previous attempts to bridge between the two sub-disciplines within linguistics. This year, we started to work on our own projects.

In light of this, most of the year was dedicated to presentations by members from our group. Over the course of the first semester, the faculty members presented, each one in several meetings, their new research in the field:

- **Elitzur Bar-Asher Siegal** presented his work on the development of external negators in Jewish Babylonian Aramaic and in Sicilian. He explored the relevance of the diachronic origin of the negators, on the one hand, and syntactic change, on the other, for the semantic analysis of the so-called external negators. He also examined the significance of this analysis for the understanding of a variety of linguistic phenomena, e.g., positive polarity items in English, light negation in German.
- **Nora Boneh** introduced her work on auxiliary and light verb uses of *ba* 'come' in Hebrew. In this work she attempts to explore meaning components that contribute to the general pragmatic and semantic inferences the constructions under discussion give rise to, and then to formulate hypotheses about the

expected impact of the presence or absence of these meaning components on similar constructions in earlier layers of Hebrew and other languages. The more general interest in this work is tracing patterns of stability and change in complex verb constructions featuring verbs of *coming* and *going*.

- **Aynat Rubinstein's** presentation continued the discussion of the semantic evolution of motion verbs, by again examining Hebrew *ba* 'come'. Aynat presented a historical study of the verb's development in the early 20th century, proposing a new pathway of change (from motion to desire) and a semantic analysis of the pathway.
- The second term began with **Eitan Grossman's** report on his participation in an international conference on *reanalysis*, a crucial notion for the theory of semantic change. We devoted one meeting to reading recent literature that challenges the idea that reanalysis is a monolithic phenomenon.

Most of the second term was dedicated to the projects of the group's doctoral students:

- **Kevin Grasso** presented preliminary thoughts about developments of complementizers in Biblical and Mishnaic Hebrew. After feedback from the group members, he abandoned this project, and turned to study the semantic change in Ancient Hebrew from stative to perfect and perfective forms in light of existing work by C. Condoravdi & A. Deo, among others.

- **Shira Tal** presented her work on the effect of information structure on Differential Case Marking, exploring the possibility of modeling diachronic processes in experimental settings.
- **Omri Amiraz** presented his ongoing research on the position and semantic scope of negation (in expressions like 'not all S are P') from a comparative diachronic perspective.
- **Noa Bassel** presented her ongoing research on the polyfunctionality of reflexive pronouns across languages, with a special focus on their relationship with intensifiers.

After presenting their projects to the entire group, each of the graduate students met separately with two of the faculty members for more detailed feedback.

The highlight of our activity this year were two extended visits, at the end of the second semester, by prominent

scholars who are among the founders of the field of formal diachronic semantics. We had the privilege to host **Prof. Ashwini Deo** (Ohio State University), who came for 6 weeks in May, and **Prof. Cleo Condoravdi** (Stanford University), who joined us for 3 weeks in June. Each of them presented her ongoing research to the group, over multiple meetings. They also met with all members of the group individually and discussed our individual projects.

We also held with them formal and informal meetings, in which we discussed the prospectives of the new emerging field in linguistics that stands at the heart of our research group. As part of the last meeting of the year, we read and discussed with them Elitzur Bar-Asher Siegal's paper (*Formal Semantics and Historical Linguistics – one way to look at the state-of-the-art*), in which he aims at providing a critical assessment of the current literature in this emerging field and explores possible new directions that can be advanced.



In the Templars' Footsteps

“In Someone Else’s Shoes” Research Group (2018-2021) —

**Prof. Amos Goldberg, Prof. Ariel Knafo, Prof. Galit Noga-Banai, Prof. Lilach Sagiv
Yonatan Harel, Ofek Kehila, Tal Orlitsky, Ilil Tal, Matan Aviel**

The ‘In Someone Else’s Shoes’ research group is special in Scholion’s corridors, because it is composed of psychologists (two senior scholars and two students), together with an art historian, two historians, and two additional PhD candidates in art history and Spanish literature. No wonder than that the first year of collaboration had twofold aims:

1. Crystallization of the research group: Getting to know the members of the group, their research topics, and goals for the next three years.
2. Since the team subject is empathy, we decided to dedicate some of the seminars to discuss what empathy is. We thought that the best way to understand the term would be to read some constitutive texts selected by the group members in accordance with their discipline, and to invite some guests to expand the possibilities suggested by the term.

Our guests lecturers varied: Dr. Yifat Gutman, from the Department of Sociology and Anthropology of Ben-Gurion University, presented her research about "Memory Activism: Remember our Injustice Toward The Other"; Prof. Yvonne Dohna, from the Pontifical Gregorian University of Rome, presented her work about "Empathy in Romano Guardini: The Work of Art Educates the Look of Love"; she also presented her research on "Roman Guardini: The Icon of Empathy"; Prof. Eran Halperin of the Baruch Ivcher School of Psychology, IDC Herzliya, spoke about "Empathy and Relationships between

Groups"; and Dr. Maayan Davidov from the Paul Baerwald School of Social Work and Social Welfare at the Hebrew University, showed us how empathy looks in the very beginning of life and talked about "The Development of Empathy during Infancy". Finally, Prof. Michael Bongardt from University of Siegen, NRW, Germany, spoke about "Empathy and Ethics – A Philosophical Survey accompanied by Hans Jonas and Emmanuel Lévinas".

On the Day of Ascension (June 6th), we visited the Church of the Ascension on the Mount of Olives. We learned to appreciate the status quo between the various denominations in Jerusalem, and we saw how on specific day at specific spots the different communities share the holy space and sacred time.

We would like to thank the Mandel Center, its director and staff for their support.





2019: Tavi Salomon

Excursion to the Mount of Olives on Ascension Day

Mandel Fellows

Dr. Carla Baricz, English Department

Dr. Or Hasson, Department of Romance and Latin American Studies

Dr. Daniel Lav, Department of Arabic Language and Literature

Dr. Giddon Ticotsky, Department of Hebrew Literature

Dr. Yonatan Vardi, Department of Hebrew Literature

Dr. Rachel Wamsley, English Department

Dr. Yosi Yisraeli, Department of Jewish History and Contemporary Jewry

Farewell from Dr. Rachel Wamsley



I am a scholar of Yiddish literature and the history of the book, in residence at the Center as a Mandel postdoctoral fellow since the autumn of 2016. Since then I have been fortunate enough to benefit from the full three years of the fellowship as I

pursued many projects in an academic environment of unparalleled creativity, challenge, and interdisciplinary dialogue. I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to the Mandel Scholion Center and all its staff, as well as to my colleagues both here at the Center and in the Jack, Joseph and Morton Mandel School more broadly: senior scholars, postdoctoral fellows, and graduate students from a multiplicity of fields. Conversations with these

colleagues were directly responsible for some of the most significant breakthroughs in my recent work, a true testimony to the importance of the Center's commitment to interdisciplinary humanistic inquiry. Finally, I owe a special debt of gratitude to the Center's academic and administrative directors, Professor Daniel Schwartz, Ms. Keren Sagi and Ms. Yana Abramovich, who were all indefatigable in their support for my work.

This final year of the fellowship saw the appearance of my article "A Pure Language (Or Lip)': Representing Hebrew in Colonial New England," drawn from research for my book-project on cross-cultural collaboration in the material production of early modern Jewish books. Published in *Studies in American Jewish Literature: A Journal of Literary Criticism and Theory*, this essay examined the first grammar of Hebrew published in colonial America as a case study in the graphic design of Hebrew on the page—whether in Hebrew or Latin characters—for non-Jewish audiences. An article from my second book-project, "Past Made Present: Temporal Translation in *Shmuel Bukh*," will appear later this year in a forthcoming volume from Böhlau Press.

In January 2019 I had the privilege of co-organizing an international workshop, "Masters of the Book: Conversations on Book History as Discipline and Method," in collaboration with Ray Schrire of the Mandel School's Doctoral Honors Program. Featuring renowned historians of the book Ann Blair (Harvard) and Adam Shear (University of Pittsburgh), this day-long workshop showcased the current research of doctoral students from across Israel, bringing them into productive dialogue with two of the field's defining figures.

During the fall and spring semesters I offered two MA seminars in the English Department: "Telling Time: Problems in the Literary Representation of the Past" and "Translation in Theory and Practice." Working with the students of the English Department during my three years at the Hebrew University has been a true pleasure and I was especially gratified that the research projects of two former students were selected for inclusion in the department's annual Graduate Student Symposium.

With the start of the coming academic year, I will join the Faculty of the Department of Foreign Literatures and Linguistics at Ben-Gurion University, where I will further develop my second book-project on the rhetorical representation of the historical past, as well as offering courses on poetry, poetics, and the literature(s) of early modern Europe.

It is with both excitement and sadness that I bid farewell to Scholion's remarkable culture of exploration and inquiry; I am certain the conversations begun here will long continue to define my scholarly work. I once again offer my deepest thanks to the Center for this extraordinary opportunity.

Farewell from Dr. Or Hasson

During the past three years, I have had the privilege of being a Mandel Postdoctoral Fellow at the Mandel Scholion Center. During these years, I have completed my book manuscript, "Between Medicine and Literature: Narrating Madness in Early Modern Spain," in which I explore the dialogue between scientific writing about



madness and literary representations thereof, and had the chance to teach two advanced courses related to the topics I engage with in the book: "Between Medicine and Literature: Madness and Melancholy in Early Modern Spain," and "Lovesickness in Late-Medieval and Early Modern Spain".

During my stay, I have also completed the research for an extensive study of the role of Hebrew and Arabic in early modern Spanish lexicography, and the place of Semitic languages in the cultural imagination of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Spain. A seminar I taught, "Imagining Language: Literary Approaches to Early Modern Spanish Non-Fiction", enabled me to test some of the ideas I was working with on advanced students from the Department of Spanish and Latin American Studies. This study is expected to be published next year in *Al-Qantara: Revista de Estudios Arabes*.

A third project, which I hope to be completing in the upcoming months, has to do with the translation of Spanish classics into modern Hebrew vis-à-vis the creation of a World Literature canon in Hebrew. This project was born out of my experience of teaching the Spanish canon to first-year students at the Hebrew University which, among other things, obliged me to map (and read) the existing translations of Spanish classics in Hebrew (and Arabic) – a challenge that eventually

led me to engage in a critical examination of their local reception. Such an examination would not be possible without the knowledgeable interlocutors I found at the Mandel Scholion Center, and especially Dr. Giddon Ticotsky, whose intimate acquaintance with the history of twentieth-century Hebrew Literature and, no less important, his intellectual generosity, encouraged me to think about the literature I specialize in from a new, local, perspective.

During my time at the Mandel Scholion Center I have also had the chance to co-convene—in collaboration with colleagues from King's College London—an international workshop titled “Al-Andalus/Iberia/Sepharad: Traveling Concepts and Cross-Cultural Contexts”, which was held at the Mandel Building. Much of the workshop's success had to do with the Center's support and the collaboration of its members and staff, both on the academic side—two other Mandel Fellows, Dr. Yosi Yisraeli and Dr. Jonathan Vardi, as well as the Academic Head of the Center, Prof. Daniel Schwartz, participated in the workshop—and on the technical side, which the administrative staff—and especially Yana Abramovich-Mahlin, who had only started her job as the Executive Director of the Center—handled with utmost competence and care.

In the upcoming year I will be joining the University of Tel Aviv's Zvi Yavetz School of Historical Studies as a Thomas Arthur Arnold Postdoctoral Fellow. As excited as I am about exploring new horizons and pursuing new projects, I will always remember my years at the Mandel Scholion Center as ones of intellectual growth, freedom, and a sense of belonging to a dynamic multi-

disciplinary community of researchers. For this, I wish to express my deepest gratitude to the Center's academic and administrative staff, along with all my colleagues at the Center. I hope our paths will cross again in the future!

Farewell from Dr. Daniel Lav



I am a researcher of Islamic theology and religious thought, with a primary focus on the Salafī school of Sunnī Islam, both medieval and modern. I started as a Mandel postdoctoral fellow in the fall of 2017. One year previously, directly after submitting

my dissertation at the Hebrew University, I held a postdoctoral fellowship at Princeton (a leading center of Salafī studies, among its other merits). The Mandel Scholion fellowship essentially made it possible for me to realize my desire to return to Israel and seek my future in Israeli academia, and even in optimal conditions at my own home university.

With this summary of my time at Scholion I am also bidding a kind of farewell to the truly outstanding colleagues and staff at the program, since I have just started a regular tenure-track position and am leaving behind me the postdoctoral years. The good news is that my position is in the Department of Arabic Language and

Literature at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, which I consider ideal both in terms of research, teaching, and intellectual community, and also in that all I will have to do is cross the Botanical Garden in order to visit the good people at the Scholion Center to whom I owe so much, as well, of course, to the donor who makes the program possible.

Much of my time at Scholion was devoted to revising the manuscript of my dissertation with an eye towards publication. The book, titled *Salafi Political Theology*, is now under contract with Cambridge University Press and should hopefully go to press early in 2020. The work takes as its starting point a central doctrine for modern Salafis, especially for the radical branch of Salafism affiliated with militant organizations such as al-Qā'ida and ISIS. This doctrine, which I call "theonomy," holds that the application of God's law on earth, and exclusive obedience to that law, is a *sine qua non* of faith, and in consequence all socio-political systems founded on man-made law are inherently polytheistic, from tribal custom up to and especially modern democracy. This doctrine serves as the principal *casus belli* for Salafi militant organizations' wars against the governments of Muslim countries. In the book I explore Salafi intellectual and religious history through the lens of the theonomy doctrine, exploring its roots and, along the way, clarifying the main outlines and emphases of Salafi theology from its original formulation in the 13th-14th century, through the early Wahhābi movement, and up to the present day.

An additional and complementary line of research during my time at Scholion resulted in the article, "Ash'arism,

Causality, and the Cult of Saints," which is currently under review. In this article I examine a puzzle: Historically much of the research into the medieval Christian cult of saints (and to a lesser extent its Islamic counterpart) has borne the imprint of the philosopher David Hume's influential treatise, *The Natural History of Religion*. In this treatise Hume equated true monotheism with a belief in the unity of causation in the cosmos, and conversely, equated polytheism and the cult of saints with a belief in the causal efficacy of multiple agents in the cosmos. In contrast, my research into Muslim polemic on the cult of saints found the opposite: The defenders of the cult of saints were the ones with the stricter insistence on God's monopoly on causation, and in fact anchored their apologies on this very principle. The article analyzes the major writings in this debate from the fourteenth century to the present and, on that basis, suggests a revision of how we approach and study the topic of the cult of saints in general.

In addition to my research activities, and like my fellow Mandel postdocs, I have taught two semester classes each year in the Department of Arabic Language and Literature. In my case, knowing that I would be joining the Department after Scholion, I also took on a number of other educational-related departmental duties and feel already fully integrated into the Department. This has been a wonderful benefit for me, allowing me to hit the ground running, as it were. For example, I already have students who are interested in writing graduate theses under my direction, and I greatly look forward to the opportunity to encourage and guide a younger generation of scholars.

Monthly Lounge Seminars

Room 530, Mandel Building, Thursdays 12:15–14:00

November 1, 2018

Meeting toward a Field Trip

January 3, 2018

Dr. Jonathan Vardi, Mandel Fellow

Musical Aspects of the Poetry of Shmuel HaNaggid

March 14, 2019

Dr. Carla Baricz, Mandel Fellow

Shakespeare the Legionary/ Shakespeare the Jew: Romanian Readings of the Bard in the 1930s.

April 11, 2019

Guest Lecture: Prof. Yvonne Dohna, Pontifical Gregorian University

Empathy in Romano Guardini: The Work of Art Educates the Look of Love

May 16, 2019

Dr. Roni Mikel Arieli, "In Someone Else's Shoes" research group,

Presentation of a Doctoral Thesis: Remembering the Holocaust in a Racial State: Cultural and Discursive Aspects of Holocaust Memory in South Africa from Apartheid to Democracy 1948-1994.

June 20, 2019

Final Presentations by Members of the "Materials for Change" research group.

Book Launches

October 10, 2018

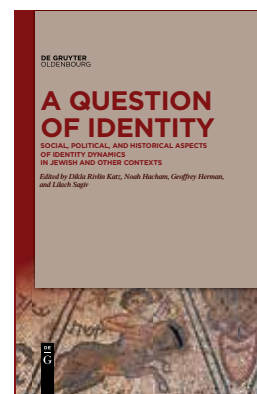
Studies for Tal Ilan at Sixty: Sources and Interpretation in Ancient Judaism (ed. M. Piotrkowski, G. Herman and S. Doenitz; 2018). Several members of the Center participated in this volume.

April 29, 2019

Jonathan M. Benarroch, *God and His Son: Christian Affinities in the Shaping of the Sava and Yanuka Figures in the Zohar* (in Hebrew; 2018). The author was a member our "The Interpretive Imagination" research group (2008–2011)

September 9, 2019

A Question of Identity: Social, Political, and Historical Aspects of Identity Dynamics in Jewish and Other Contexts, Edited by Dikla Rivlin-Katz, Noah Hacham, Geoffrey Herman and Lilach Sagiv (2019; collective volume of our "Question of Identity" research group (2014–2017)



Conferences

December 3–6, 2018

International Conference: Unique and Common Artifacts as Social Actors | Concluding conference of the “Materials for Change” research group

May 12, 2019

Iberia, Al-Andalus, Sepharad: Traveling Concepts and Cross-Cultural Contexts
Organized by Dr. Or Hasson

May 26–29, 2019

Understanding Personal Values: Personality, Contexts, and Culture
Organized by Prof. Lilach Sagiv

Long-Term Guests

This year the Center hosted three guests for several weeks each. Two were guests of the “Historical Linguistics and Formal Semantics” research group: **Prof. Ashwini Deo** of Ohio State University, who specializes in semantics and pragmatics with a focus on Indo-Aryan languages, came for six weeks in May-June, and **Prof. Cleo Condoravdi** of Stanford University, who is a scholar of semantics-pragmatics and language change, overlapped with her for three weeks in June. Each of them presented her ongoing research to the group, in several meetings, and they also met with the junior and senior members of the group individually, sharing thoughts about their respective projects. Both guests also gave invited colloquia at the Department of Linguistics during their visits. Professors Condoravdi and Deo, who are among the founders of *formal diachronic semantics*, the emerging field at the heart of the group's research agenda, joined

the group's last meeting of 2018/19 in a roundtable discussion about the contribution of formal semantics to historical linguistics, with Elitzur Bar-Asher Siegal's manuscript “*Formal Semantics and Historical Linguistics – One way to look at the state-of-the-art*,” providing a point of departure for the discussion.

Our third long-term guest was **Prof. René Bloch**, who is head of the University of Bern's Institute of Jewish Studies and also a member of its' Institute of Classical Philology. He stayed at our Center during the first several weeks of September, working on an edition of Philo's *Life of Moses*, and his lecture, “On Mother-Tongues and Fatherlands: Philo in the Egyptian Diaspora.” His work blended with the September 19 launching of the “Question of Identity” research group's collective volume.

Publications

Conference volume of our 2014-2017 research group

A Question of Identity: Formation, Transition, Negotiation. Edited by D. Rivlin Katz, N. Hacham, G. Herman and L. Sagiv. Berlin: De Gruyter Oldenbourg Publishing House.

“‘Who am I?’ and ‘Who are we?’ are the existential, foundational questions in our lives. In our modern world, there is no construct more influential than ‘identity’ – whether as individuals or as groups. The articles in this book put identity at the center of their investigations. They vary considerably in the periods they study and in the groups they focus on. They share, however, a keen interest in understanding how social identity is defined, formed, and preserved, and how they change vis-à-vis the social context in which the research is nested.

The articles in this book are the result of the work presented at the group’s January 2017 conference. The conference dealt with identity formation in six contextual settings: ethno-religious identities in light of the archaeological record; Second Temple period textual records on Diaspora Judaism; Jews and Christians in Sasanian Persia; minorities in the Persian Achaemenid period; inter-ethnic dialogue in Mandatory Palestine; and redefinitions of Christian Identity in the Early Modern period.

Conference volume of our 2013-2016 research group

Language Contact, Continuity, and Change in the Genesis of Modern Hebrew. Edited by Edit Doron, Malka Rappaport Hovav, Yael Reshef, and Moshe Taube. Amsterdam and Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company. 2019

The emergence of Modern Hebrew as a spoken language constitutes a unique event in modern history: a language which for generations only existed in the written mode underwent a process popularly called “revival”, acquiring native speakers and becoming a language spoken for everyday use. Despite the attention it has drawn, this particular case of language-shift, which differs from the better-documented cases of creoles and mixed languages, has not been discussed within the framework of the literature on contact-induced change. The linguistic properties of the process have not been systematically studied, and the status of the emergent language as a (dis)continuous stage of its historical sources has not been evaluated in the context of other known cases of language shift. The present collection presents detailed case studies of the syntactic evolution of Modern Hebrew, alongside general theoretical discussion, with the aim of bringing the case of Hebrew to the attention of language-contact scholars, while bringing the insights of the literature on language contact to help shed light on the case of Hebrew.

Mandel Scholion
2019/2020

New Research Group

Our New Research Group “Setting Tables” (2019–2022)

What are the cultural meanings and social implications of eating together? Dining is a behavioral practice that anchors the production and shared consumption of food in time and space. Sharing meals is therefore a fundamental social institution in which biology, culture, and cuisine coincide. By employing a comparative perspective, the *Setting Tables* group will address the affective, embodied and discursive dimensions of eating (and non-eating!) together, and ask how this complex event constructs communal socio-cultural boundaries and hierarchies, as well as facilitates cultural exchange, in different historical times and societal contexts.

In *Setting Tables* we will not focus on the production, procurement, or distribution of food. Rather, we are more interested in understanding food as a multilayered construct, a practice by which crucial socio-historical boundaries are constantly drawn. More specifically, the group will explore the physical and normative dimensions of eating together. To this end, our group will address the material and non-material qualities of eating, such as spatial events, private/public boundaries in eating, intercultural contacts of eating rituals, and the production of socio-cultural boundaries in space while eating. The physical dimension includes the ways in which shared meanings that constitute subjects, communities, and social hierarchies are continuously performed in domestic, urban, and political spaces of eating. The normative dimension examines how eating practices that take place in diverse historical and cultural

contexts are created, regulated, and change through time, and how such practices maintain social order and cohesion, shape and reinforce group identities, and, finally, define Otherness and, as a corollary, in-group relationships.

Members of the group:

**Dr. Yair Furstenberg, Dr. Dana Kaplan,
Prof. Nathan Wasserman, Prof. Zeev Weiss,
Nadia Beider, Adi Namia-Cohen, Hadass Shambadal,
Shlomi Zemach, Dafna Israel**



New Mandel Post-Doctoral Fellows



Dr. Omer Michaelis completed his doctorate at Tel Aviv University. Omer specializes in medieval Jewish thought and philosophy in the Islamicate world. His work focuses on the dynamics of production, transmission and integration of knowledge in medieval Judaism,

and its intersection with parallel processes in Islamic culture. In his new project, he seeks to explore the role of discourses of forgetting in medieval Judaism. In studying the Jewish tradition, historians have prevalingly been concerned with the topic of remembrance and have seen forgetting only as a misfortune and a failure. But what if these so-called failures were a prerequisite for the blooming of creative powers and for the reinterpretation of the past? Michaelis' project aims at exploring this hitherto unexplored terrain of surprising intercultural encounters which took place during the Middle Ages—between East and West, tradition and innovation, and Judaism in its various manifestations and Islam.



Dr. Iyas Nasser completed his doctoral degree at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. Iyas devotes his research to pre-Islamic and early Islamic poetry. His doctoral dissertation investigated the conventional amatory opening of such early poems, analyzing its forms and

narrative components, and at Mandel Scholion he plans to explore the content and the forms of the extended simile in such poetry, as well as in its Quranic context, elucidating the function of this literary device from a narratological perspective. Nasser, who has taught for several years at the Hebrew University and at the David Yellin Academic College, is himself a poet, and has published two collections of his poems.



Dr. Guy Ron-Gilboa earned his doctorate at the Hebrew University. Guy is concerned, in his research, with the discourse of marvels (*'aġā'ib*) and the marvelous in classical Arabic prose literature during the ninth–thirteenth centuries.

By exploring discussions of wonder in various medieval genres and texts, ranging from analytical definitions to narrative representations of marvelous phenomena and the responses that they trigger, Ron-Gilboa seeks to offer a wide and nuanced perspective on the different meanings, perceptions, and uses of wonder in medieval Arabic literature.

Congratulations to...

Prof. Leore Grosman ("Materials for Change" research group), Dr. Aynat Rubinstein ("Linguistics and Formal Semantics"), and Prof. Nathan Wasserman ("Setting` Tables"), who were awarded Israel Science Foundation research grants.

Dr. Or Hasson (Mandel Fellow, 2016–2019), who was appointed Thomas Arthur Arnold postdoctoral fellow at the University of Tel-Aviv's Zvi Yavetz School of Historical Studies.

Ofek Kehila ("Empathy" research group), who was awarded a Rotenstreich doctoral fellowship.

Dr. Daniel Lav (Mandel Fellow, 2017–2019), who was appointed to a tenure-track lectureship in HUJI's Department of Arabic Language and Literature.

Dr. Roni Mikel Arieli ("Empathy" research group), who was awarded a postdoctoral fellowship at the Jack, Joseph and Morton Mandel Center for Advanced Holocaust Studies at the US Holocaust

Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C.

Naomi Simhony ("Materials for Change" research group), who was awarded a Leo Baeck Institute doctoral fellowship.

Dr. Rachel Wamsley (Mandel Fellow, 2016–2019), who was appointed to a tenure-track lectureship in Ben-Gurion University's Department of Foreign Literatures and Linguistics.

The new research group that was chosen (out of seven proposed groups) for 2020–2023 is entitled "Past Perfect," and will devote its energies to the understanding of the past in various historical periods. It was put together by four senior members of the Faculty of Humanities: **Prof. Reuven Amitai** (Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies), **Prof. Uzi Leibner** (Archaeology), **Prof. Nili Wazana** (Bible and Jewish History), and **Prof. Alex Yakobson** (History). Doctoral students will be added to the group via a call for applicants in the spring of 2020.



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