

TAU Archaeology

The Jacob M. Alkow Department of Archaeology and Ancient Near Eastern Cultures

The Sonia and Marco Nadler Institute of Archaeology

The Lester and Sally Entin Faculty of Humanities | Tel Aviv University

Number 8 | 2022



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Newsletter of

The Jacob M. Alkow Department of Archaeology and Ancient Near Eastern Cultures

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Message from the Chair of the Department and the Director of the Institute

We are pleased to open this 8th issue of our newsletter with a personal reflection on the International MA Program on Ancient Israel Studies. For both of us this program was a dream for many years, and one of us (O.L.) paved the road for its establishment and has been its head since its inception. It was always clear to us that there is no better place to study ancient Israel, archaeology and the Hebrew Bible than here—the place where these events took place and the books were formed. We also wanted to ensure that our Israeli students are exposed to international scholarship and students. Both sides benefit from such encounters, and it is clear that in the international academic arena, Israeli students need to interact, to overcome the language barriers and to be exposed to methods and ideas coming from abroad.

Thus, the fact that our international program is now in its 11th year is true cause for celebration. During these years we watched the program develop, establishing itself as the leading and most important program in Israel—and perhaps worldwide—to combine archeology of the southern Levant in biblical times, biblical studies, epigraphic sources from the ancient world, and above all, the general historical picture of Israel and the ancient world, in the broadest sense.

A total of 149 students have graduated after completing their studies in our program. Each of them experienced the high demands that we place, the need to work hard, investing a lot of work and effort during the academic year and continuing in the summer to four weeks of excavations. Any of the students who met our very high requirements and was interested in writing a thesis was given a topic tailored to his or her abilities and desires. In many cases, the thesis included the processing of findings from the various excavations conducted by scholars of our Institute of Archaeology, and in all cases the research and writing process was accompanied by close, personal and instructive guidance. Sixty-seven students are writing or have already completed their MA thesis in the program, often going on to publish the results of their research in peer-reviewed journals, books and archaeological reports and to lecture on the results of their research in academic

conferences. Twenty-one of our MA students decided to further their studies and undertake a PhD, most of them supervised by members of our Department of Archaeology and Near Eastern Studies and others in universities in Israel and abroad. Seven have already completed their PhD and are currently conducting post-doctorate studies, some even employed as faculty in universities outside Israel. As an aside, we should mention our pride in the fact that the program offers equal opportunities to women: of the 89 women who completed their studies in the program, 41 wrote an MA thesis, ten continued to a PhD and six have successfully completed their studies and have earned the right to add the title “Dr.” before their name.

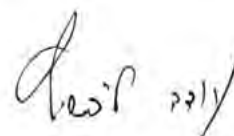
We are very proud of our international students and are happy to accompany them on their journey to academic growth and to observe their personal development as young researchers.

The transition of the international program into the Department of Archaeology and Near Eastern Cultures, which took place only last year, opens new horizons and will enable many students who until now could not afford tuition fees to attend. We look forward to even greater diversity of students in the coming years, while maintaining the highest level of teaching and learning in the program and better integration of international students with our Israeli students.

Congratulations to the teachers, to the administrative staff and, of course, to all past, present and future students!



Prof. Yuval Gadot
Chair, The Jacob M. Alkow
Department of Archaeology
and Ancient Near Eastern Cultures



Prof. Oded Lipschits
Director, The Sonia
and Marco Nadler
Institute of Archaeology

The International MA Program on Ancient Israel Studies



USA

Meredith Bergen (2011)
Zachary Dunseth (2011)
Alysha Filipkowski (2011)
Adam Kaplan (2011)
Rachel Kleiner (2011)
Dafna Laskin (2011)
Michael Millman (2011)
Raphaella Primus (2011)
Nurit Roded (2011)
Gennadiy Shoykhedbrod (2011)
Hannah VanVels (2011)
Juan Vidal (2011)
Mark Cavanagh (2012)
Erin Hall (2012)
Justin Holcombe (2012)
Kyle Legant (2012)
Vanessa Linares (2012)
Amanda Morrow (2012)
Craig Smitheram (2012)
Abra Spiciarich (2012)
Phillip Tobin (2012)
Vanessa Workman (2012)
Sean Dugaw (2013)
Joshua Goldman (2013)
Jordan Gripe (2013)
Logan Hunt (2013)
Shelley Metzger (2013)
Sarah Richardson (2013)
Daniel Sanders (2013)
Brandon Simonson (2013)
Marc Wallace (2013)
Emily Bischoff (2014)
Ryan Greenberg (2014)
Maya Hadash (2014)
Beirit Harvey (2014)
Rebecca Martinez (2014)
Elizabeth Paredes (2014)
Jonathan Parker (2014)
Benjamin Douglass (2015)
Yael Hochma (2015)
David Krouwer (2015)
Lamia Larkin (2015)
Havah Postolsky (2015)
Heather Smith (2015)
Rosemarie Bodrucki (2016)
Lisa Campbell (2016)
Brett Cohen (2016)
Nathaniel Deaton (2016)
Nathaniel Garfinkle (2016)
Samuel Lewis (2016)
Noah Marcus (2016)
Hannah Morgan (2016)
William Ondricek (2016)
Elijah Kollin (2017)
Jacob Lerner (2017)
Ruthy Lewis (2017)
Brittany Payne (2017)
Jordan Weitzel (2017)
Nicole Callaway (2018)
Phillip Foglia (2018)
Marissa Tsiao (2018)
Brienne Cook (2019)
LeeAnn Culbertson (2019)

Canada

Mirah Burgener (2011)
Blake Hewie (2012)
Mordechai Benzaquen (2013)
Angela Hodson (2015)
Raquel Joshua (2015)
Rachel Ko (2015)
Wei Chen (2020)

United Kingdom

Denize Jacques (2011)
Michael Shamah (2012)
Christina Jones (2013)
Madeleine Butcher (2017)
Heidi Maynard (2019)

Germany

Sabine Kleiman (2012)
Jonathan-George Steilmann (2021)

Switzerland

Renate Fahrni (2019)

Mexico

Diana Medellin Martinez (2018)
Andrea Garza Diaz Barriga (2020)

Puerto Rico

Danilo Giordano (2014)
Steve De Santiago Molina (2020)

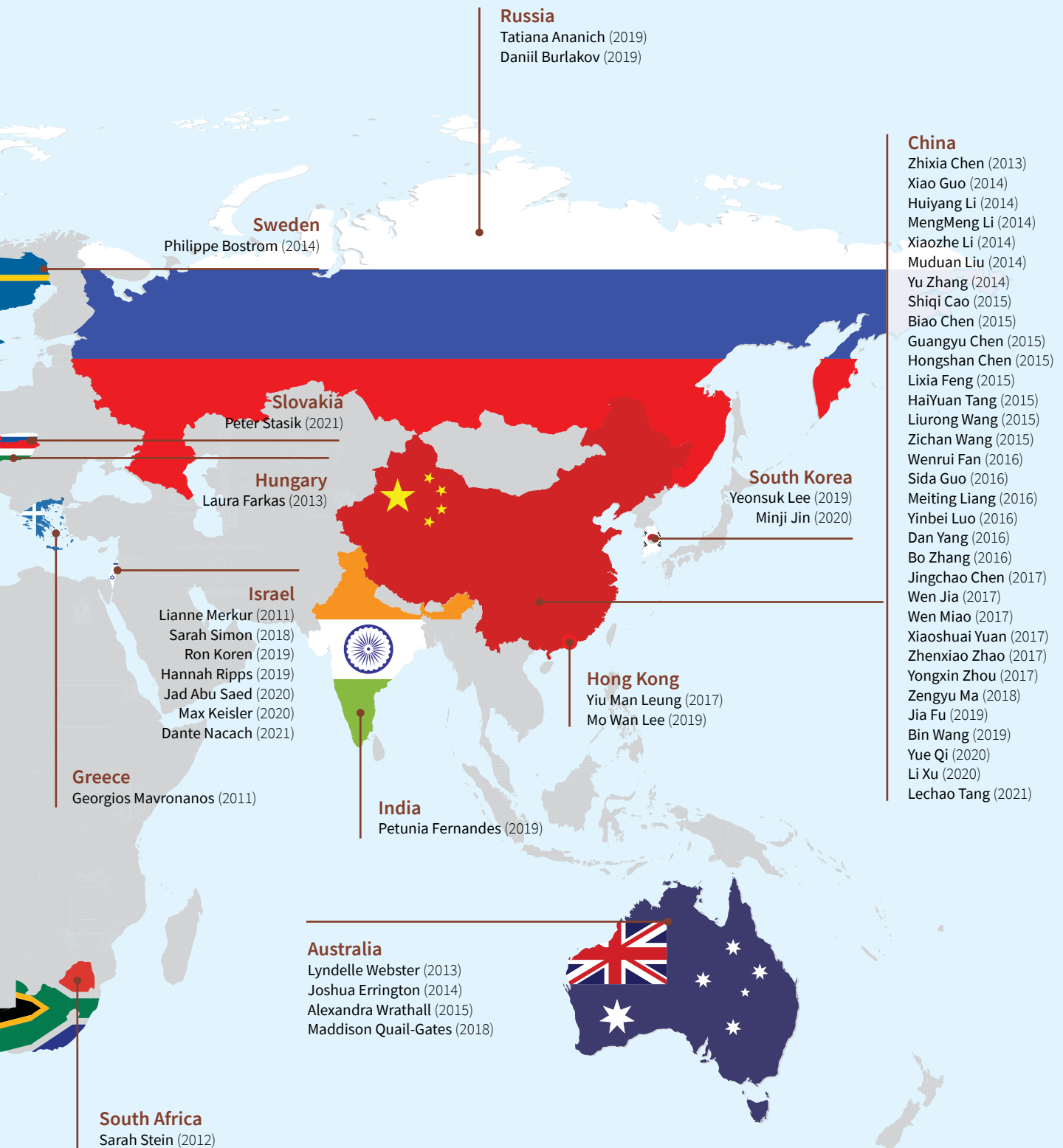
Cameroon

Chenwi Louis (2011)

Chile

Victor Toledo (2016)

Nathaniel Freeman (2019)
Phyllis Kumbera (2019)
Kristen Maiocco (2019)
Erin Williams (2019)
Chaundra Anderson (2020)
Emily Anderson (2020)
Nicolas Bonnetta-Mistelli (2020)
Shawn Denton (2020)
Jacob Dicken (2020)
Claudia Epley (2020)
Samuel Gillett (2021)
Abigail Klein (2021)
Brandi Mullis (2021)
John Will Rice (2021)
Henry Rodriguez (2021)
Remi Cara Rosen (2021)
Vijaya Singh (2021)



Our Lecturers



Erez Ben-Yosef is Professor of Archaeology in our department. He directs the Central Timna Valley Project in southern Israel, where he and his team have unearthed evidence of intense copper production from the time of David and Solomon. His research focuses on ancient technologies, especially metal production, and on the archaeological sciences. Erez studied archaeology and geology at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem (BA, BSc, MSc) and archaeology and anthropology at the University of California, San Diego (MA, PhD). His post-doctoral research at Scripps Institution of Oceanography focused on the ancient copper mines of Cyprus and the application of slag material in geomagnetic research. Erez has authored multiple research papers on Bronze and Iron Age archaeology, and his recent publication on the architectural bias in biblical archaeology has triggered a broad discussion on the interpretation of nomads in archaeology, history and related disciplines.

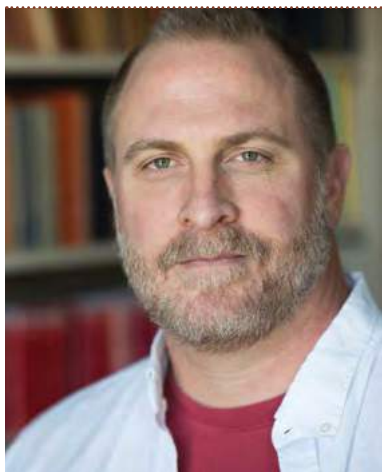
Aure Ben-Zvi Goldblum

joined the International MA Program for the 2021–2022 academic year as a Biblical Hebrew lecturer. Aure received her BA and MA at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and is currently pursuing a PhD at New York University. Her interests span the entire Bible, but she is particularly interested in late biblical texts, Apocrypha, Pseudepigrapha and the Dead Sea Scrolls. She is currently focusing on aspects of authority and power, both in texts and people, in the ancient Near East. With a strong background in teaching Hebrew (both modern and biblical), Aure is interested in language pedagogy in general, and in ways to accommodate learning difficulties in particular. Aure's recent project exploits digital tools to make research and classes more accessible.



The late **Shlomo Bunimovitz** was Professor of Archaeology in the Jacob M. Alkow Department of Archaeology and Ancient Near Eastern Cultures and served as the department's head between 2006 and 2010. Shlomo taught courses on the archaeology of Israel, on the broader Mediterranean and on archaeological theory from 1978 to 2020. He conducted extensive fieldwork at sites such as Tel Aphek–Antipatris, Shiloh and, most notably, Tel Beth-Shemesh (with Zvi Lederman), as well as surveys of the Sharon and the central coastal plain, the Sinai and Mount Ephraim. His publications deal with topics such as ceramic vessels and their cultural contexts, the relationship of Late Bronze Age Canaanite city-states with Egypt and one another, and the Late Bronze Age collapse in Canaan, as well as Cypriot culture in the proto-historical and historical periods. Prof. Bunimovitz passed away on December 5, 2020.

Our Lecturers



Robert R. Cargill is Associate Professor of Classics and Religious Studies at the University of Iowa and Editor of *Bible & Archaeology*. Robert earned his PhD in 2008 from the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Cultures at the University of California, Los Angeles. He teaches biblical studies, Second Temple Judaism, archaeology, and ancient languages including biblical Hebrew, Aramaic, Greek, and Syriac. A specialist in public scholarship, Robert regularly appears on *CNN*, *History*, *Discovery* and *Nat Geo*, where he contributes and consults on shows like *Nat Geo*'s "Writing the Dead Sea Scrolls," *History*'s "Jesus: His Life," *CNN*'s "Finding Jesus," *History*'s "Bible Secrets Revealed," and most recently, *CNN*'s "Jerusalem: City of Faith and Fury." He has excavated at Banias, Omrit, Hazor, and most recently at Tel Azekah with the Institute of Archaeology of Tel Aviv University.



Yoram Cohen is Professor of Assyriology in our department. Yori teaches both Akkadian for beginners and seminars on Akkadian literature in the International MA Program. His research interests are the history of the Bronze Age in Syria, ancient Near Eastern wisdom literature and the intellectual history of the ancient Near East. He has authored four books and over 70 articles and reviews.



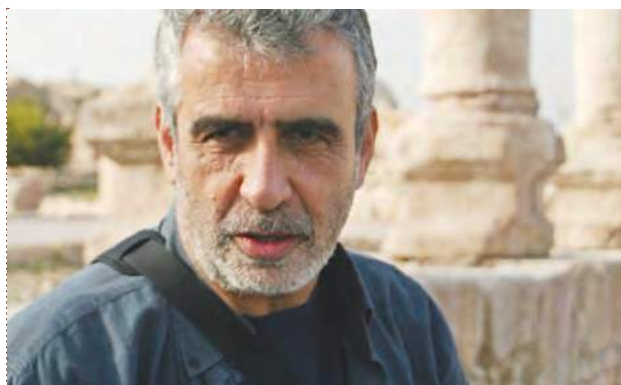
Karen Covello-Paran completed her PhD at Tel Aviv University in 2015 and has been teaching in the International MA Program since 2018. She is a distinguished field archaeologist for the Israel Antiquities Authority and has directed and published numerous salvage excavations. Karen's fields of interest are the Bronze and Iron Ages in the southern Levant. Her research focuses on interpreting the material expression of society, economy and culture through a holistic approach, incorporating evidence from funerary and settlement sites. She is a co-founder of the Intermediate Bronze Age Research Forum and currently co-directs the research project "The Archaeological Expression of Palace-Clan Relations in the Early Iron Age Levant," together with Dr. Omer Sergi.

Our Lecturers



Meir Edrey has been teaching in the International MA Program since 2014. He is also adjunct lecturer in the Department of Maritime Civilizations at the University of Haifa and the Professional Director of the Leon Recanati Institute for Maritime Studies. He received his PhD from the Johannes Gutenberg University, Mainz, Germany, in 2016. His main interests center on the Phoenician culture in the eastern and western Mediterranean in the first millennium BCE, especially on religion and cultic practices. His dissertation, published in 2019, was titled “Phoenician Identity in Context: Material Cultural Koiné in the Iron Age Levant” (Alter Orient und Altes Testament 469) and focused on the ethnicity and identity of the Phoenicians in their homeland in light of the material culture. Meir has extensive archaeological fieldwork experience, directing excavations on behalf of the Institute of Archaeology and cooperating with several foreign expeditions.

Alexander Fantalkin is Associate Professor of Archaeology in our department. Within the International MA Program, he has taught courses on pottery typology and burial customs. His research focuses on Near Eastern archaeology and history vis-à-vis the Aegean world, in the second and first millennia BCE. He deals extensively with questions on state formation in ancient Israel, biblical archaeology, burial customs, the Greek presence in the East before the Hellenistic period, Greek and Phoenician colonization and, especially, chronological synchronization in the Iron Age from a pan-Mediterranean perspective. Alexander is actively engaged with an international project developing a new Rehydroxylation (RHx) dating method for archaeological ceramics. He is also developing a new methodology for clarifying site formation processes, trying to understand the basic laws behind artifact behavior in different soils and environmental conditions. Since 2013 he has directed a large-scale archaeological project at the coastal site of Ashdod-Yam.



Israel Finkelstein is Professor Emeritus of Archaeology at Tel Aviv University and Director of the School of Archaeology and Maritime Cultures at the University of Haifa. He completed his PhD in 1983, taught at the University of Chicago and the Sorbonne and spent research years at Harvard University and the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. Israel has conducted many field projects, including the excavation of Megiddo, and has authored many books and around 400 articles. He is a member of the Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities and a foreign member of the French Académie des Inscriptions et Belles Lettres and the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. Israel won the Dan David Prize in 2005, was named Chevalier de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres by the French Minister of Culture in 2009, received a doctorate *honoris causa* from the University of Lausanne in 2010, and was awarded the MacAllister Field Archaeology Award of the American Schools of Oriental Research in 2017. From 2008 to 2021 he edited *Tel Aviv: Journal of the Institute of Archaeology of Tel Aviv University*.

Our Lecturers



The late **Moshe Fischer** was Professor Emeritus of classical archaeology and was among the first teachers involved in the International MA Program, introducing students to the classical world of the Near East. His research focused on the manifestation of Greek, Roman and Byzantine architecture and architectural decoration, material culture and settlement patterns in the Near East. One of his main research topics was the use of imported marble architecture and art in classical period Israel based on typological and laboratory research, as reflected by numerous articles and his monograph *Marble Studies: Roman Palestine and the Marble Trade*. He also published work concerning the impact of Roman roads in Judaea. Moshe was Director of the Yavneh-Yam Archaeological Project and co-director of the Yavneh Archaeological Survey Map (with Itamar Taxel). Prof. Fischer passed away on August 22, 2021.

Liora Freud works as a project coordinator at our institute and is the Associate Editor of our Salvage Excavation Reports series. From 2013 to 2015 she taught a course in the International MA Program titled “From the Potter’s Wheel to the Archeological Report,” on the technology of pottery production and on publishing ceramics in archaeological reports. Her PhD dissertation, supervised by Prof. Oded Lipschits and titled “Judahite Pottery in the Transitional Phase between the Iron Age and the Persian Period: Jerusalem and Environs,” focused on Babylonian period pottery. She began her speciality in ancient pottery, mainly of the Iron Age, while working for many years with the late Prof. Itzhak Beit-Arieh, and she has participated in the publication of many sites in the Beersheba Valley. She is the registrar and pottery expert for the Lautenschläger Azekah Expedition and is currently coordinating the publication of the finds from the renewed excavations at Ramat Raḥel (2005–2010).



Yuval Gadot is the Chair of the Jacob M. Alkow Department of Archaeology and Ancient Near Eastern Cultures. He received his PhD from Tel Aviv University in 2004, with a dissertation on “Continuity and Change: The Transition between the Late Bronze Age and the Iron Age in Israel’s Central Coastal Plain.” Yuval has conducted many field projects, including at sites such as Ramat Raḥel and Azekah. He is currently the co-director of Tel Aviv’s excavation project at the City of David in Jerusalem. His research agenda includes a study of Jerusalem’s ancient core together with interdisciplinary study of the rural landscape surrounding the city. He is also currently co-directing a project titled “The Formation of Terraced Landscapes in the Judean Highlands, Israel,” funded by the Israel Science Foundation. Yuval’s publications include *Ramat Raḥel III, IV and VI*, the Bronze Age Cemetery at ‘Ara and the recent co-editing of *Rethinking Israel*, a volume in honor of Prof. Israel Finkelstein (Winona Lake, 2017).

Our Lecturers



Amir Gilan is Professor of Hittite and Anatolian Studies at our department. Amir received his BA from Tel Aviv University, his MA from the Freie Universität Berlin and his PhD from University of Leipzig. His research focuses on the political, religious, literary and cultural history of ancient Anatolia, especially in the second millennium BCE. He has published work on Hittite history, historiography, literature, mythology and religion. His recent research projects include “The Hittites and Their Past: Forms of Historical Consciousness in Hittite Anatolia,” funded by the Israel Science Foundation (ISF), which explored the ways the Hittite erudite elite recounted the past and related to it. His current research project, also funded by the ISF, is dedicated to the religious world of King Hattusili III as reflected in his Autobiography and in related texts.

Shai Gordin is a historian of the ancient Near East and digital humanist at Ariel University and founding director of the Digital Pasts Lab. He received his PhD from the Freie Universität Berlin in 2012. He has published on the cuneiform scribal culture of the Hittite Empire and on Babylonian economy, cult and history. He also leads a project to study the ancient Mesopotamian city of Uruk using ancient texts and satellite imagery. His interests are machine identification and translation of cuneiform signs, human and machine cooperation, spatial data analysis, social networks and linked open data. The Digital Pasts Lab is geared towards performing innovative research in digital humanities, with an emphasis on historical research. Shai aims to create an interdisciplinary workspace among different humanities researchers and between humanities researchers and data scientists, which develops and enriches both worlds.



Boaz Gross teaches the Introduction to Field Archaeology course in the International MA Program. Boaz earned his BA and MA in archaeology at Tel Aviv University and is currently pursuing his PhD, which focuses on the development of public archaeology in Israel, archaeological antiquities legislation and policy. Boaz was an area supervisor in the Ramat Rahel, Masada and Azekah Expeditions, and is currently the Field Director of the Masada Expedition. He has directed numerous salvage excavations across Israel, most recently at Tel Beth-Shemesh (East). He is the Vice President of the non-profit organization Israeli Institute of Archaeology, which specializes in community and salvage excavations, public outreach and archaeological services.

Our Lecturers



Shua Kisilevitz studied archaeology at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem (BA and MA) and is currently a PhD candidate in our department. Since 2017, Shua has taught courses on academic writing and research as well as Israelite religion in the International MA Program. Following five years excavating at Tel Hazor, Shua joined the Israel Antiquities Authority in 2007, and has since directed excavations throughout the Jerusalem and Judean region. Together with Prof. Oded Lipschits, Shua currently co-directs the Tel Moza Expedition Project, which aims to fully uncover the unique Iron II temple found at the site. Her work on the Moza temple in recent years has led her to focus primarily on the study of iconography and the development of cult/religion in Judah during the Iron Age, with particular interest in their correlation with industry/economy and the rise of structured social and political communities and elites in the southern Levant during this period.

Ido Koch is Senior Lecturer in our department. Ido earned a BA in history at the Open University and an MA and PhD in archaeology at Tel Aviv University, after which he completed a postdoctoral fellowship in the Department of Religious Studies at the University of Zurich. Currently, Ido is co-director of the Tel Hadid Archaeological Expedition and of Stamp-seals from the Southern Levant, a joint Swiss–Israeli project funded by the Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF). He also serves as co-editor of *Tel Aviv: Journal of the Institute of Archaeology of Tel Aviv University*. His research interests include the archaeology of the southern Levant during the second and first millennia BCE, colonial encounters, ancient visual language, Bronze and Iron Age Levantine religion(s) and the connection between archaeology and community.



Dafna Langgut is the Head of the Laboratory of Archaeobotany and Ancient Environments and Senior Lecturer in our department. She received her PhD in archaeology in 2008 from the University of Haifa. Dafna specializes in the study of past vegetation and climate based on the identification of botanical remains. Through this discipline, she considers the past relationship between humans and the environment, e.g., human dispersal out of Africa and the beginning of cultivation. Her research also involves the identification of micro-botanical remains (mainly pollen) and macro-botanical remains (wood-charcoal remains) from archaeological contexts. These studies address issues such as agricultural practices, diet, plant usage, social stratification, plant migration, ancient gardens and wooden implements. Dafna is also the curator of pollen and archaeobotanical collections at the Steinhardt Museum of Natural History, Tel Aviv University.

Our Lecturers



Oded Lipschits is Professor of Jewish History in our department and since 2011 has served as the Director of the Sonia and Marco Nadler Institute of Archaeology. Oded is the founder and head of the International MA Program. He is also the Incumbent of the Austria Chair of the Archaeology of the Land of Israel in the Biblical Period. He co-directed the excavations at Ramat Raḥel between 2005 and 2010, and currently directs both the Lautenschläger Azekah Expedition (since 2012) and the excavations at Tel Moza, the site of a biblical period temple a few kilometers from Jerusalem (with Shua Kisilevitz; since 2018). Oded's main research focuses on the archaeology, history, economy and administration of the southern Levant in general, and Judah in particular, under the yoke of the empires from the 8th to the 2nd century BCE.

Mario A.S. Martin is Co-Director of the Megiddo Expedition of Tel Aviv University and the Tel Shimron Excavations of Tel Aviv University and Wheaton College. He completed his Ph.D. work at the University of Vienna with Professor Manfred Bietak in 2005. His extensive field experience includes work at Tell el-Dab'a, Egypt, excavated by the Austrian Archaeological Institute, and twenty years of excavation at Tel Megiddo. Mario has published numerous articles and a monograph on Egyptian pottery and is the co-editor of the Megiddo publication series. His research interests are Egyptian–Canaanite relations, Bronze Age pottery and chronology and ceramic petrography.



Avital Romach received her BA *magna cum laude* in Latin and Ancient Near Eastern Cultures from Tel Aviv University in 2019. She has served as a teaching assistant for both Akkadian for Beginners and Hittite for Beginners in the International MA Program. Avital is currently finishing her MA in ancient Near Eastern cultures at Tel Aviv University. Her thesis, concerning the fifth tablet of the Epic of Gilgamesh, provides a new digital edition of all known fragments of the text, with a commentary that discusses new information available from the latest discovered fragment: a picturesque description of a cedar forest with its flora and fauna, which is unparalleled in Mesopotamian literature.

Our Lecturers



Lidar Sapir-Hen is Senior Lecturer in our department and the head of the Laboratory of Archaeozoology. Working across a range of interdisciplinary fields, Lidar studied life sciences at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem (BSc), and ecology/zoology and archaeology at Tel Aviv University (BA, MSc and PhD). She specializes in the study of animal remains. Her main research interests include the interaction between humans and animals in the past, social complexity of ancient populations, and aspects of identity and culture as reflected in food production and consumption. Lidar is currently involved in several excavations that date from the early Neolithic to Late Antiquity.

Philip Sapirstein received his PhD in art history and archaeology from Cornell University in 2008. In 2019 he was promoted to Associate Professor in the School of Art, Art History & Design at the University of Nebraska–Lincoln, after serving as Assistant Professor from 2013. His research interests are the history of art and architecture of the Mediterranean, in particular that of ancient Greece, Rome, and the Near East. As one of the leading practitioners in Mediterranean archaeology of digital techniques, notably photogrammetry and 3D analysis, the digital humanities are an important aspect of his research. Philip has held numerous prestigious fellowships, including from the National Endowment for the Humanities, ACLS, Mellon, Fulbright Foundation, and the American School of Classical Studies in Athens, and has published widely on the history and technology of Greek architecture and on digital methods for their analysis.



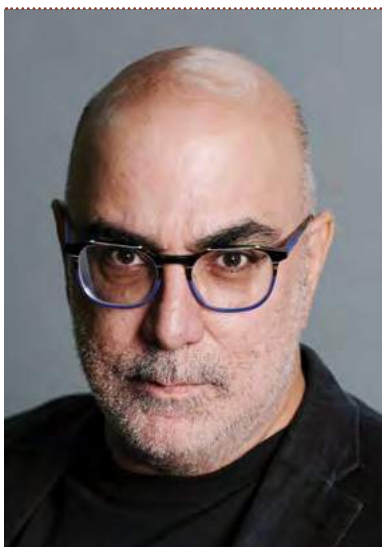
Omer Sergi is Senior Lecturer who joined our department in 2021. He teaches a course titled “Introduction to the Archaeology and History of the Land of the Bible in the Late Bronze–Iron Age” in the International MA Program, as well as various seminars. He completed his PhD at Tel Aviv University under the supervision of Prof. Oded Lipschits in 2012 and conducted his post-doctoral studies at the University of Heidelberg, Germany from 2012 to 2014. His main field of study is the archaeology and history of the southern Levant in the Bronze and Iron Ages, and his research focuses on the question of state formation in the Levant in the early Iron Age. Omer directed the excavations at the site of Ḥorvat Tevet in the Jezreel Valley, and he currently co-directs the research project “The Archaeological Expression of Palace–Clan Relations in the Early Iron Age Levant” with Karen Covello-Paran.

Our Lecturers



Nitsan Shalom is a current PhD candidate at Tel Aviv University. Her dissertation will analyze the 586 BCE Babylonian destruction of Jerusalem, using microarchaeological methods alongside traditional archaeology and text analysis. Her research interests include implementation of scientific methods in the study of archaeological strata, especially destruction layers, settlement history of Judah in the middle of the first millennium BCE, ideological aspects of destructions and the ways they are expressed in historiographic narratives. Nitsan's field experience includes her work as an area supervisor in Tel Azekah (since 2012), where she is excavating a cultic complex destroyed at the end of the Late Bronze Age, and as field director in the excavations at Giv'ati Parking Lot in the City of David (2017–2020), focusing on a public building destroyed at the end of the Iron Age, which Nitsan is using as a main test case in her research.

Deborah Sweeney is Senior Lecturer in Egyptology in our department. She has been teaching courses for 25 years, including ancient Egyptian and seminars on Egyptian culture and history in the International MA Program. She received a BA in Egyptology and biblical Hebrew at Oxford University and came to live in Israel in 1981. She completed her PhD at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem in 1990. Her main research interests are women and gender in ancient Egypt, everyday life texts such as administrative documents, and the village of Deir el-Medîna, the home of the artists and craftsmen who built the royal tombs in the Valley of the Kings. Deborah also researches and publishes Egyptian objects from the department's excavations.



Oren Tal is Professor of Near Eastern, classical and medieval archaeology, with a focus on the social, political, and economic implications of the material culture of the ancient Near East. He received his PhD in archaeology from Tel Aviv University in 2002 and served as Chair of the Jacob M. Alkow Department of Archaeology and Ancient Near Eastern Cultures from 2010 to 2013. He is the current Director of the Apollonia–Arsuf Excavation Project (since 2007) and Co-Director of the German–Israeli Tel Izṭabba Excavation Project (since 2019). He serves as Executive Editor of the Institute of Archaeology's Salvage Excavation Reports series. Oren's research interests include early indigenous Levantine coinages (Persian and Hellenistic periods) and the development of a monetary economy, Hellenization and the East, West-Semitic and Greek epigraphy and ancient technologies (glass production and agricultural product processing). He is currently working on the final reports of Apollonia-Arsuf and Tel Izṭabba, as well as on a corpus of Samaritan coinage.

Our Lecturers



Renata Tamar joined the International MA Program for the 2021–2022 academic year as a Biblical Hebrew lecturer. She completed her BA and MA studies in Bible and Hebrew language at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. Her studies focused on biblical Hebrew, integrating both biblical studies and Hebrew linguistics. She was also certified to teach Hebrew to non-native Hebrew speakers. Currently, her main interest is teaching Hebrew to newcomers to Israel, along with biblical and Jewish studies instruction to a variety of audiences. She also guides new teachers in language pedagogy and in the implementation of digital tools for Hebrew instruction.

Itamar Taxel taught in the International MA Program in 2013 and 2014. He received his PhD in archaeology from Tel Aviv University in 2011. He is currently the head of the Pottery Specializations Branch of the Israel Antiquities Authority (IAA) Archaeological Research Department. Itamar is involved with various fieldwork and research projects on behalf of the IAA, as well as of Tel Aviv University (notably, the Yavneh-Yam, Ḥorvat Zikhrin, Aphek–Antipatris and Ramat Raḥel excavations, and the Yavneh regional survey) and the Israel Nature and Parks Authority (the Migdal Aphek and Sepphoris excavations). He co-directs an interdisciplinary project on unique Early Islamic agricultural systems along the Israeli Mediterranean coast, funded by the Israel Science Foundation and the Gerda Henkel Foundation. He has authored and co-authored four monographs and numerous articles and book chapters on the archaeology of Early Roman to Late Islamic Palestine.



Paula Waiman-Barak was appointed Head of the Laboratory for Ceramic Petrography in the Institute of Archaeology in June 2020. She taught the course “Introduction to Ceramic Petrography” in the International MA Program in the Spring 2021 semester. She is also the Editor for Petrography of the Levantine Ceramics Project (LCP). Paula has worked as a field archaeologist and ceramics specialist for 20 years, both on land at coastal sites and underwater. She is a highly-skilled ceramic petrographer dedicated to studying provenance and technology with an eye toward questions of production and distribution. Paula’s specialty is Mediterranean archaeology in the Bronze and Iron Ages, and her research focuses on the long-term investigation of socio-economic links between Mediterranean societies by interpreting pottery from harbor sites. Her current projects include investigating Philistine wares from Tel Qasile and Late Iron Age Phoenician ceramics.

Our Lecturers



Guy D. Stiebel is the Head of the Neustadter Archaeological Expedition to Masada, which commenced excavations at the World Heritage site in 2017. In the past five seasons new evidence for Herod's horticulture and viticulture were brought to light in the excavations, along with new insights regarding the inhabitants of rebellious Masada, the Roman army and the Byzantine monastery of Marda. Guy specializes in the Archaeology of Classical Palestine and the Near East, with an emphasis on military archaeology and the archaeology of refugees. He earned his PhD in 2007 at University College London (University of London), focusing on the military equipment of Roman Palestine. He has published extensively on material-culture related themes and on the interface between historical texts and archaeological evidence. Guy is currently working on a commentary to the War Scroll (1QM).

Ortal Harush is joining the International MA Program in the second semester of the 2021–2022 academic year. She received her PhD from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem in 2021, with a dissertation that explores the significance of variability and assesses whether collective and individual signatures are observable through an advanced shape analysis of ceramic vessels. Ortal is Head of the Computational Archaeology Laboratory, which specializes in the production of high-resolution 3D models of various objects, from bones and seeds to ceramics and flint. The lab, which was launched in October 2020, offers students and scholars the opportunity to utilize the diverse tools available to scholarship through 3D scanning, offering new methods for the collection, processing and analysis of computational data.



Our Students' Research

Benzaquen, Mordechay

The Arboreal Remains of Tel Megiddo: Interpreting Environmental Conditions and Cultural Preferences through the Analysis of Botanical Remains

Advisors: Dr. Dafna Langgut and Prof. Israel Finkelstein
Submitted: May 8, 2017

Bischoff, Emily

On Sheep, Shame, and Sodomy: A Case Study of Purification Rituals in the Hittite Empire

Advisor: Prof. Amir Gilan
Submitted: September 27, 2017

Butcher, Madeleine

Northern Holemouth Jars in the Iron IIA: A Royal Israelite Administrative System for the Redistribution of Wealth

Advisors: Prof. Oded Lipschits and Dr. Omer Sergi
Submitted: October 23, 2020

Callaway, Nicole

Body Language: Deciphering and Decoding the Functions of Female Clay Figurines from the Late Bronze Age to the Iron Age II

Advisor: Prof. Oded Lipschits and Dr. Ido Koch
Submitted: October 7, 2021

Cavanagh, Mark

Sustainability of an Industry on the Fringe: A Dendroarchaeological Investigation into Fuel Sources at the Iron Age Copper Smelting Sites of the Timna Valley

Advisors: Prof. Erez Ben-Yosef and Dr. Dafna Langgut
Submitted: February 29, 2016

Chen, Zhixia

Chinese Porcelain Found in Israel from the Early Islamic and Crusader Periods

Advisors: Dr. Edna J. Stern, Prof. Assaf Goldschmidt and Prof. Oded Lipschits
Submitted: December 28, 2017

Douglass, Benjamin

The Provenance of Nabataean Copper: Isotopic and Chemical Analysis of Nabataean Bronze Coins Set in a Regional Context

Advisors: Prof. Erez Ben-Yosef and Dr. Guy D. Stiebel
Submitted: March 4, 2020

Dugaw, Sean

A New Typology of Arrowheads from the Late Iron Age and Persian Period and Its Historical Implications

Advisors: Dr. Guy D. Stiebel and Prof. Oded Lipschits
Submitted: April 17, 2016

Dunseth, Zachary

Settlement Oscillations in the Negev Highlands: Exploring Subsistence Practices during the Intermediate Bronze Age? The Site of Mashabe Sade

Advisor: Prof. Israel Finkelstein and Prof. Ruth Shahak-Gross
Submitted: January 5, 2014

Errington, Joshua

Processes in the Site Formation of Tel Azekah: From the Early Bronze Age until the Hellenistic Period

Advisor: Prof. Oded Lipschits
Submitted: October 26, 2016

Farkas, Laura

Tel Gerisa in the Early Late Bronze Age: Determining the Character of the Site in the Late Bronze I and IIA through an Evaluation of the Ceramic Remains from Stratum 10

Advisor: Prof. Alexander Fantalkin and Prof. Ze'ev Herzog
Submitted: August 17, 2017

Giordano, Danilo

Cultural Contact between Mitanni and the Southern Levant during the Egyptian Occupation: A Study of Mitannian Cylinder Seals

Advisors: Prof. Amir Gilan and Prof. Oded Lipschits
Submitted: February 26, 2018



Our Students' Research

Hall, Erin

Hoarding at Tel Megiddo in the Late Bronze Age and Iron Age I

Advisors: Prof. Israel Finkelstein and Prof. Benjamin Sass

Submitted: February 29, 2016

Hochma, Yael

Archaeomagnetism of Rhodian Amphorae Stamped Jar Handles: Contribution to the Study of Hellenistic Jerusalem

Advisors: Prof. Erez Ben-Yosef and Prof. Oded Lipschits

Submitted: June 28, 2018

Hodson, Angela

Monumental Buildings in the Second Temple Period in Rural Judaea

Advisor: Dr. Guy D. Stiebel

Submitted: December 31, 2020

Hunt, Logan

A Middle Bronze Age Stone Tool Assemblage from Megiddo: Determining Function and Significance

Advisor: Prof. Israel Finkelstein and Prof. Steve Weiner

Submitted: October 19, 2017

Jones, Christina

Inter-Regional Connections during the Late Bronze Age as Reflected through the Animal Economy: Azekah—A Case Study

Advisors: Dr. Lidar Sapir-Hen, Dr. Omer Sergi and Prof. Oded Lipschits

Submitted: March 9, 2017

Kaplan, Adam

The View from the Kefar Veradim Tomb: Exploring the Iron Age IIA in the Western Mountains of the Upper Galilee

Advisor: Prof. Alexander Fantalkin

Submitted: February 26, 2015

Kleiman, Sabine

On the Eve of Destruction: Analyzing the Chronology, Function and Distribution Pattern of a Late Bronze Pottery Assemblage from Tel Azekah

Advisors: Prof. Yuval Gadot and Prof. Oded Lipschits

Submitted: March 15, 2015

Kollin, Elijah

The Animal Economy of a Border Town: Iron Age II and Persian Period Faunal Remains from Tel Azekah

Advisors: Prof. Oded Lipschits and Dr. Lidar Sapir-Hen

Submitted: October 12, 2020

Lewis, Ruthy

The Glass Assemblage at Tel Hadid: An Exploration and Illumination of the Byzantine Settlement

Advisor: Dr. Ido Koch and Dr. Ruth E. Jackson-Tal

Submitted: December 31, 2020

Linares, Vanessa

Assessing Canaanite Livelihood: Organic Residue Analysis of Household Assemblage at Tel Azekah

Advisors: Prof. Yuval Gadot, Prof. Oded Lipschits and Dr. Dvory Namdar

Submitted: June 29, 2015

Liu, Muduan

Egyptian Interventions in the Southern Levant during the Rule of the 28th–30th Dynasties (404–342 BCE): An Archaeological Investigation

Advisors: Prof. Oded Lipschits and Dr. Shirley Ben-Dor Evian

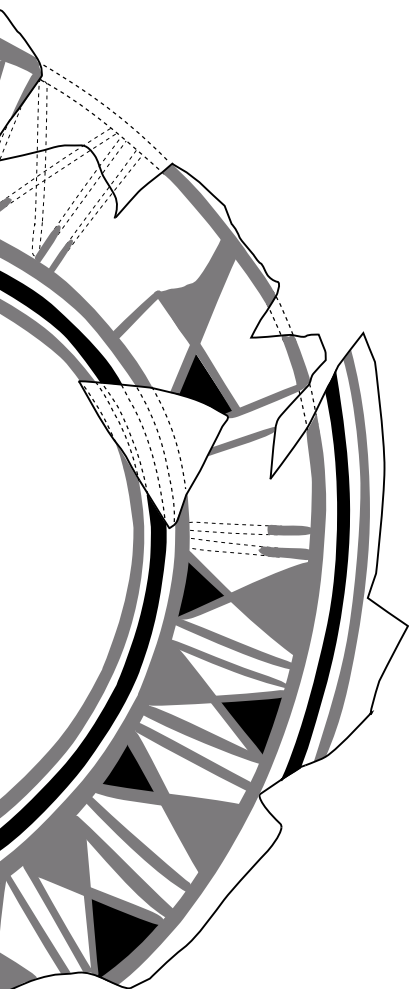
Submitted: January 13, 2019

Mavronanos, Georgios

Yadnana and the Assyrians: Illuminating the Role of Cyprus within the Trade Network of the Assyrian Empire

Advisor: Prof. Alexander Fantalkin

Submitted: February 26, 2015



Our Students' Research

Merkur, Lianne

Perceptions of the Past in Conflicted Societies: The Case of Lod, Israel

Advisors: Prof. Yuval Gadot
and Prof. Oded Lipschits
Submitted: January 28, 2014

Millman, Michael

Archaeomagnetic Constraints on the Chronology of the Judean Stamped Jar Handles

Advisors: Prof. Erez Ben-Yosef
and Prof. Oded Lipschits
Submitted: September 19, 2014

Richardson, Sarah

A Late Bronze Production Kit from Tel Azekah: Origin, Use, and Implications

Advisor: Prof. Oded Lipschits
Submitted: September 4, 2016

Sanders, Daniel

Civīs Romanūs Sūm: Urbanism, Imperialism, and Acculturation in the Cities of the Southern Levant between the Hellenistic and Roman Periods in Light of the Evidence from Beth She'an/Scythopolis

Advisor: Dr. Guy D. Stiebel
Submitted: February 20, 2019

Shoykhedbrod, Gennadiy

Assyrian Influence on the Judean and Philistine Olive Oil Industries: A Reexamination of the Economic Development at Ekron

Advisors: Prof. Alexander Fantalkin
and Prof. Oded Lipschits
Submitted: May 28, 2014

Smitheram, Craig

OSL Dating of Timna's Copper Mines: Insights on Technological Evolution and Social Organization

Advisor: Prof. Erez Ben-Yosef
Submitted: February 29, 2016

Spiciarich, Abra

Dietary Habits and Identity of Early Roman Jerusalem as Reflected in the Kidron Valley Landfill Faunal Assemblage

Advisors: Dr. Lidar Sapir-Hen,
Prof. Yuval Gadot and Prof. Oded Lipschits
Submitted: March 22, 2015

Tsiao, Marissa

Fibulae of the Southern Levant during the Iron Age II: Chronology, Inter-Regional Connectivity, and Performance

Advisor: Dr. Ido Koch
Submitted: October 6, 2021

Wallace, Marc

The History of Settlement at Tel Shalaf and the Battle of Eltekeh

Advisor: Prof. Alexander Fantalkin
Submitted: September 7, 2017

Weitzel, Jordan

Early Iron Age Burial Practices in Light of the Cemetery of Ḥorvat Tevet

Advisors: Prof. Oded Lipschits
and Dr. Omer Sergi
Submitted: March 2, 2021

Workman, Vanessa

The Fabric of Copper Production: The Textile and Cordage Artifacts from Iron Age Timna

Advisors: Dr. Orit Shamir
and Prof. Erez Ben-Yosef
Submitted: February 29, 2016

Wrathall, Alexandra

"A Pit's Perspective": An Early Iron Age IIB Pottery Assemblage from Tel Azekah: Typology, Chronology, and Context

Advisors: Prof. Oded Lipschits
and Prof. Yuval Gadot
Submitted: October 11, 2018

Yuan, Xiaoshuai

Contextual Analysis of Seals of Iron Age IIB Judah

Advisors: Dr. Ido Koch
and Prof. Oded Lipschits
Submitted: December 1, 2021

Zhao, Zhenxiao

Chanter une Fois de Plus: Technical and Iconographical Study of the Coffin Lid of Djedmut, Chantress of Amun-Re in Israel Museum at Jerusalem

Advisor: Dr. Deborah Sweeney
and Dr. Shirly Ben-Dor Evian
Submitted: August 31, 2021

Research Currently Underway

Ananich, Tatiana

Judahite Burial Practices as a Reflection of Social Organization and Persona

Advisors: Prof. Oded Lipschits and Prof. Alexander Fantalkin

Burlakov, Daniil

Examination of the Back Sides of Bullae: Functional Analysis of 7th–6th-century BCE Bullae from the “City of David”

Advisors: Prof Oded Lipschits and Prof. Yuval Gadot

Chen, Jingchao

Tracing Household Ingredients in Iron Age IIC Tel Hadid and Tel Beth-Shemesh: A Pilot Study with Organic Residue Analysis on Pottery Assemblages

Advisor: Dr. Ido Koch and Dr. Cynthia Spiteri

Fahrni, Renate

Egyptian Stamp-seals from the 25th and 26th Dynasties in Judah and Philistia: Typology, Context, and Historical Implications

Advisors: Dr. Ido Koch and Dr. Deborah Sweeney

Freeman, Nathaniel

Trading Systems in the Late Bronze Age Azekah Petrographic Studies of Cypriot and Mycenaean Ceramics

Advisors: Prof. Oded Lipschits and Dr. Paula Waiman-Barak

Garza Diaz Barriga, Andrea

Common Ware Pottery Production Tradition in the Hellenistic and Roman Periods: Magdala as a Case Study

Advisors: Prof Andrea Berlin, Prof. Ze'ev Herzog, Dr. Paula Waiman-Barak and Prof. Oded Lipschits

Gillett, Samuel

Petrographic Network Analysis of the Distribution of Late Roman 1 Amphorae in the Eastern Mediterranean

Advisors: Prof. Andrea Berlin, Prof. Oded Lipschits and Dr. Paula Waiman-Barak

Jin, Minji

Reconstruction of Paleoenvironment and Wood Exploitation at Tel Azekah between the Middle Bronze Age and the Hellenistic Period

Advisors: Prof. Oded Lipschits and Dr. Dafna Langgut

Lee, Mo Wan

The Ground Stone Assemblages of Nahal Yarmuth 38, a Neolithic Site in Central Israel

Advisor: Prof. Avi Gopher

Lee, Yeonsuk

Insights into the Daily Life of Azekah: A Multi-Disciplinary Investigation of Cooking Ware in the Middle Bronze and the Late Bronze Ages

Advisors: Prof. Oded Lipschits and Dr. Paula Waiman-Barak

Maynard, Heidi

Stucco at Masada: Analysis of Typology and Composition Combined with 3D Imagery

Advisor: Dr. Guy D. Stiebel

Medellin Martinez, Diana

Differential Degradation of Cellulosic vs Proteinaceous Fibers from Dry Climate. The Case of the Iron Age Timna Textiles

Advisors: Prof. Erez Ben-Yosef and Dr. Christina Margariti

Quail-Gates, Maddison

Red, White and Blue Decorated Pottery from the Middle Bronze Age: Corpus, Typology and Function

Advisors: Prof. Oded Lipschits, Prof. Yuval Gadot and Prof. Assaf Yasur-Landau

Ripps, Hannah

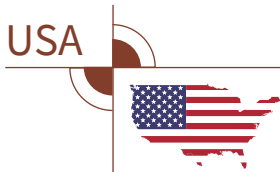
Temples of the Late Bronze Shephelah: The View from Azekah Area E3

Advisors: Prof. Oded Lipschits and Prof. Yuval Gadot



Ten Years in the “Holy Land”

Dr. Erin Hall



I worked throughout my undergraduate career at the University of Connecticut in a pizza place close to campus. One day, as I was preparing to graduate, I waited on the parents of a high-school friend of mine. After hearing from them that she had spent six weeks digging in Israel, I decided I would find an excavation of my own.

I was already intrigued by Israeli archaeology, after my Religion advisor, Stuart Miller, showed my Second Temple Judaism class images of important finds from Israel. I started searching for a place to dig, looking at sites such as Tel Dan and Ashkelon. But an aerial photograph of Megiddo caught my eye in the beauty of the mound. I contacted the dig liaison and asked to volunteer for seven weeks, and she later sent an e-mail that there was a spot for me.

I arrived at Ben Gurion Airport on a Saturday and took a train and then a taxi from Binyamina to Kibbutz Ramat HaShofet, where members of the Megiddo project were being housed. As the taxi drove me through Israel for the first time, it suddenly dawned on me that I was finally in the “Holy Land”—a place that I had studied for so long. I immediately felt at home.

I first had a conversation with Prof. Israel Finkelstein during a particularly hard day in the field. Israel asked about my studies, and I told him about my training in Second Temple Judaism. He later suggested that I apply for the International MA Program at Tel Aviv University. I applied while still digging at Megiddo, and I still recall my excitement upon hearing that I had been accepted. I began my studies at Tel Aviv University in October 2012.

Ten long but fruitful years later, I finally received my PhD. In those years I learned so much, not only about archaeology but also about adulthood. I was 22 years old when I moved here,



and I will be 32 in November. I spent some of the best years of my life here, and some of the hardest. Now I am proudly graduating from Tel Aviv University and embarking on a new journey as a post-doctoral fellow. I hope eventually to become a professor, and the best advice I can give to young scholars with similar ambitions is that you must work hard and stay focused on your goals.

A Passion for Archaeology

Ruthy Lewis



Shalom! My name is Ruthy Lewis, I was born and raised in San Diego, California and made aliyah to Israel in 2017. My passion for archaeology began in the summer of 2009 when I was visiting my family in Israel and was told about an excavation taking place just outside of Jerusalem, at a site called Ramat Raḥel. When I learned that anyone could join, I immediately signed up as I had a huge love of history and was always looking for fun new opportunities. Little did I know that this amazing experience would change my life forever. Several years after volunteering at Ramat Raḥel, I decided to further pursue my love of archaeology and enrolled in the International MA Program at Tel Aviv University in 2017.

During the program I was able to tour various archaeological sites throughout Israel. I met incredible people both from Israel and abroad, and I was exposed to various facets of archaeology. During the initial year of the program the course load was intense, which was challenging at times but ultimately rewarding, and it led me to continue on to the thesis track. In December of 2021, I completed my MA thesis, titled “The Glass Assemblage at Tel Hadid: An Exploration and Illumination of the Byzantine Settlement,” under the supervision of Dr. Ido Koch and Dr. Ruth Jackson-Tal.

My fondest memories of the program include participating in several excavations, including Tel Megiddo, Masada, Beth-Shemesh and the field school at Tel Azekah, which was such an incredibly challenging yet invigorating experience. The best outcome of being part of the program is that I got to further explore my passion for ancient glass (through my MA thesis thanks to Ido Koch) and even to attend a glass course at the British School of Athens. I also had the incredible opportunity of joining the Tel Hadid Expedition as an area supervisor, excavating a Byzantine wine-press complex (ongoing). Today, I am continuing to work with Dr. Koch on



publishing the finds from Tel Hadid, including the material uncovered during the 1990s salvage excavations (conducted by Esther Brand), as well as the ongoing Tel Aviv University excavations. I plan to continue my career in archaeology here in Israel, specifically as a glass expert, and I hope to join the PhD program at Tel Aviv University very soon.

My Home in the Middle East

Diana M. Medellín



I came to Israel from Mexico three years ago, and since then Tel Aviv University has been my home in the Middle East. I studied conservation in Mexico City, and for over 15 years I practiced the discipline, collaborating with archaeologists who excavated beautiful artifacts that were delivered to the conservation laboratories to be preserved. I always looked at archaeological information from a distance and, to tell the truth, with many questions about their registration methods, the ways in which they obtain information from the objects and the types of questions they ask of the artifacts. I saw them working from their trench, the excavation, and I from mine, the conservation lab.

I came to Tel Aviv University to cross that border and understand what my colleagues were referring to when talking about squares, locus numbers and levels. My first excavation was at Tel Azekah in the summer of 2019, where my professor, Oded Lipschits, directs an excavation of more than 80 participants (including supervisors, students and volunteers) and meticulously records every bone, metal, charcoal, or other material that may complete the puzzle of the site's history. It was a fascinating adventure: a mix of CrossFit and classroom experience, always sweetened with the laughter of our area supervisor Alex Wrathall.

In 2020, I was invited to work at the Laboratory for Conservation of Archaeological Artifacts, where I have the task and privilege of conserving objects excavated in the archaeological projects of the department. I am also working on my MA thesis, under the guidance of Prof. Erez Ben-Yosef, in which I am analyzing the conservation/degradation processes of textiles excavated by the Central Timna Valley Project, looking specifically at the differential degradation between wool and linen.



This is how I am back in the place where I belong—the conservation lab. I continue to worry about avoiding corrosion in metals, dust, pests in textiles and making good packaging for fragile objects, but now I feel that I do it from another perspective, knowing that archaeologists and conservators work toward the same objective and being more sensitive to the importance of the preservation of these artifacts for the understanding of many cultural phenomena for present and future generations.

Taking on New Challenges and Heading to My Dream Career

Xiaoshuai Yuan (April)



My name is April. I came to Israel and started learning archaeology in the autumn of 2017. My first MA degree in China was in religious studies and these three years of study in Judaism, naturally, became the prelude to my story with Israel.

We had a beautiful and fruitful first year with the loveliest classmates. The “initial phase” was one of enthusiasm, curiosity, uncertainty and courage. The good memories built up, and they can still shine in everyday life later when the passion fades. We studied ancient Egyptian with Dr. Deborah Sweeney and read the original text from the coffin decoration in the museum. We experienced field trips all year round. We gained deep friendships through the sweaty, dusty life of digging, as well as through the discussion of assignments in the building’s cafe.

I chose to stay for a thesis. The topic of my research is “The Contextual Analysis of Seals of Iron IIB Judah.” The process from preparation to writing the thesis is very difficult. Sometimes I doubt myself, but I have found that I am gradually enjoying it more and more. For me, this is like building a house or exploring my way out of a maze. With the accumulation of reading and the resolution of problems, I see the growth of my academic ability. More importantly, my perseverance has survived new trials, again and again. Prof. Oded Lipschits and Dr. Ido Koch have been the most solid and enlightening supervisors during my struggling thesis life. It was Oded who gave me the courage to face new challenges with a “tough heart” in the very beginning. I always marvel at how earnestly and promptly he gives guidance. Being his student is one of the luckiest things in my life. And I will always see it as a miracle that I know someone like Ido—his warmth, wisdom, patience and encouragement, as well as those people I get to know because of him, make me grateful and motivated.

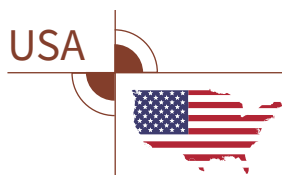


My feelings for this city and this country are more complex and multi-faceted. There are numerous moments when I complain that this place has treated me cruelly over the years: moving homes more times than I can count; going to six dentists but finding that no one could help me with a toothache; living alone through the pandemic; sleeping restlessly and being ready to run to the shelter during airstrikes; trying to remain calm despite the cultural differences I have encountered with various people—be it the bank clerk or the curator of my exhibition—and so on.

Big disasters and small troubles teach me more than I expect. Even though I still hate the moments of helplessness one feels when living alone overseas, I love Tel Aviv and Israel. Learning archaeology has made me aware that I am heading towards my dream career. And my years in Israel have made me stronger, tougher, and smarter when taking on new challenges. Luckily, a tender and pure heart has grown into a strong heart.

The Best Decision I Ever Made

Dr. Abra Spiciarich



The International MA Program at Tel Aviv University changed my life and gave me a second chance at pursuing a dream. I had always wanted to earn my doctorate in archaeology, but did not know how or what I really wanted to study. In the autumn of 2012, I arrived in Israel and it did not take

long before I found my scholarly interest: zooarchaeology. I can connect this very clearly to a single paper I wrote in my first year about the Persian-period dog burials at Ashkelon. This paper drove me into Prof. Lipschits' office requesting to study the archaeology of animals. It did not take long before I met my now long-time advisor, Dr. Lidar Sapir-Hen, and began working on a site that has been the central focus of my life since: Jerusalem.

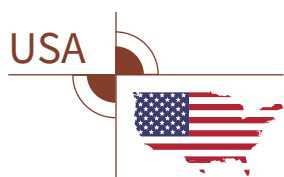
In the spring of 2015, I completed my MA thesis, titled "Dietary Habits and Identity of Early Roman Jerusalem as Reflected in the Kidron Valley Landfill Assemblage," and went to work in the private sector. While I was contemplating where to go next, I had booked a one-way flight back to California, only to find out that my advisors had found funding for the dissertation topic of my dreams. Over the course of the next five years, I stayed in Tel Aviv, finished my dissertation, "Religious and Socioeconomic Diversity of Ancient Jerusalem and Its Hinterland during the 8th through 2nd centuries BCE—A View from the Faunal Remains," and was awarded a postdoctoral fellowship at the Steinhardt Museum of Natural History. I could not have gotten half as far if it had not been for the International MA Program and the community within the halls of Gilman Building.

It is the people that make the Program, the Department and the Institute. It is from the community, the professors, the advisors, the fellows and my peers that I learned how to conduct research, how to self-motivate, how to become a public speaker, how to write and how to be a team member. This community has become my family, and almost a decade later, some of us are still here discussing theories, sites and stratigraphy. I am not sure where I would be without the International MA Program, but I do know it was the best decision I ever made.



One of the Defining Experiences of My Life

Jordan Weitzel



Prior to moving to Israel, I grew up in a small town in the United States. I always had an interest in the past, but I developed a fascination with biblical archaeology and the ancient Near East after a friend recommended that I read *The Bible Unearthed* by Prof. Israel Finkelstein and Neil A. Silberman. I later began to seek out other books and articles on the topic. Once I decided to pursue archaeology as a career, Tel Aviv University's International MA Program seemed to be the natural choice since it has the leading scholars in the field, as well as the best excavation and research opportunities. I still remember the shocked silence when I told my parents I wanted to move to Israel to study archaeology.

The program was not disappointing. During my years at Tel Aviv, I specialized in studying death and burial—an issue that we can still relate to today, and which forged a powerful connection between myself and the people I was studying. My MA thesis presented and analyzed one of the few cemeteries known in the southern Levant dated to the Iron Age I. The subject captivated me, and the process of writing the thesis made me realize I wanted to continue in research afterward.

At the same time, there were challenges. At one point, I spent a whole year in the field (excavating at Megiddo, Azekah, Beth-Shemesh and Tevet). Excavating while also trying to make progress in my studies was difficult, though this field experience was vital to my development as a field archaeologist. In addition, most of my actual thesis writing occurred during the COVID-19 pandemic, during which the university and library were frequently shut down. Through it all, my passion for what I was doing and the support system I had from the program and friends pulled me through.

I'm now back in the United States and applying to PhD programs, while also continuing to work on publications



from the various excavations I took part in, so I'm still very much in the world of archaeology. I'm in regular contact with my friends and advisors in Israel, and there are plans to return soon to participate in fieldwork and possibly even to do my PhD in Tel Aviv. No matter what course my path ends up taking, my time at Tel Aviv University will always be one of the defining experiences of my life.

It Takes a Faculty to Raise a Scholar

Alexandra Wrathall



By the summer of 2015 I had found myself in my fourth season of the Tel Azekah project, working with the Tel Aviv University team as an assistant and project administrator. At the time, I had recently submitted a history-based MA thesis in Australia and was unsure of my next step—for I had discovered my passion for archaeology and was not sure how to continue. It was during this summer that Prof. Oded Lipschits suggested the International MA Program and invited me to “change my life.”

Moving to, living within, and learning in Israel is life-changing. A dynamic landscape of so many stories and histories, it is not possible to be here and remain unchanged. Caught between the tension of then and now, the research and studies at Tel Aviv University drew my attention and expanded my imagination for the possibilities of modern scholarship and the impact of the past. As a student in Australia, it was easy to feel so far from the brilliance of Israeli archaeology, yet studying in the program at Tel Aviv University allowed me to transform the authors on a page into the teachers of my courses and the tour guides of my field trips.

During my time in the program and in the department, I have had the privilege of working professionally on several exceptional projects, including Tel Azekah, Masada, Tel Hadid and Tel Beth-Shemesh. Through these experiences, I have learnt professional flexibility and disciplinary integrity, all while applying the theories and studies of modern archaeology. As coursework eased and the thesis track emerged, I was fortunate to work on Iron II ceramic material from Tel Azekah under the supervision of Prof. Oded Lipschits and Prof. Yuval Gadot. The work of my MA thesis felt meaningful and relevant as I collaborated with my supervisors, was mentored by their senior students



and guided by scholars from across the department and institute. At the end of my program, I had expanded my base knowledge and submitted a successful thesis, which is now a published article.

They say that it takes a village to raise a child, and after my six years at Tel Aviv University, I have learnt that it takes a faculty to raise a scholar. I am grateful to my village and commit to giving of myself to the next generation just as generously as I continue along the PhD track.

Looking Forward to the Next Adventure

Maddison Quail-Gates

Australia



Hello or, as we say down under, G'day! My name is Maddi and I am a current student in the International MA Program, from Sydney, Australia. My path to studying archaeology in Israel began way back in 2014 when I had the opportunity to hear Prof. Oded Lipschits lecture at my university. After learning about his excavations at Tel Azekah, I decided to join the team as a student volunteer and soon enough, my passion for the archaeology of Israel was ignited! I began excavating in Israel every year and after loudly announcing that I was tired of the Iron Age, Oded told me to join the International MA Program with a thesis on something I had never studied—the Middle Bronze Age. So, in June 2018, I left Australia, had some fun traveling before finally settling down in Israel.

Immediately upon my arrival, I was thrown into archaeology, and for the first time, I had a seat at the forefront of research. People whose names I had only read in articles now roamed the halls of Gilman Building, offering up advice or just a nice conversation. I also had the chance to see some of Israel's most incredible archaeological sites up close, with those who excavated them as my guides. Among this wonderful new world of archaeology, I also found my place with a thesis on a fascinating but understudied group of ceramics from the Middle Bronze Age, known as Red, White and Blue Wares. Supervised by Prof. Oded Lipschits and Prof. Yuval Gadot of Tel Aviv University and Prof. Assaf Yasur-Landau of the University of Haifa, my thesis focuses on establishing the first typology of Red, White and Blue Wares and investigating their origin, production, distribution and function.

It has now been three years since I left Australia to join the International MA Program and not only has it been an adventure, but it has also propelled my career in ways I couldn't have imagined all those years ago. After starting my journey as a student volunteer, I am now a supervisor and



administrator on two archaeological projects: Tel Azekah and Tel Moza. In the coming months, I will also submit my thesis, begin publishing my results and likely begin a PhD at Tel Aviv University. Looking back, it is incredible to see how much this program gave me, both professionally and personally. Now all I can do is look forward to the next adventure!

Fieldwork

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photo: Sasha Flit

Fieldwork

Tel 10/29
G-34/201
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photo: Sasha Flit

The 2021 Excavation Season at Ashdod-Yam

Alexander Fantalkin



Prof. Rachel Gali Cinamon, Dean of TAU's Faculty of Humanities, Prof. Youval Rotman, the Head of the Chaim Rosenberg School of Jewish Studies and Archaeology, Prof Yuval Gadot, Prof. Alexander Fantalkin and other TAU officials, Theophilos III, Greek Orthodox Patriarch of Jerusalem, and other clergy, at a ceremony held at the basilica (photo: Sasha Flit)

In August 2017, during the third excavation season at the Iron Age acropolis of Ashdod-Yam, a limited sounding was conducted in the northern part of the site, almost 1 km to the northeast of the acropolis among the villas of modern Ashdod. At this place some 40 years ago, the traces of a mosaic floor were detected during modern construction activity. This sounding immediately yielded spectacular results: a Byzantine period religious complex. Systematic excavations of the complex undertaken in July–August 2019 and in 2021 have focused on further exposure of the remains of a church and associated structures. The excavations were directed by the author, on behalf of Tel Aviv University's Institute of Archaeology. Liora Bouzaglou served as supervisor of the area, assisted by Yuval Hai and Eli Itkin (all of Tel Aviv University).

The remains of a large three-aisled basilica-style church with decorative mosaic floors were found, together with elaborate chapels and additional structures to the church's north and west. An unusual number of dated inscriptions, incorporated into the mosaic floors, as well as coins, suggest that the complex was used between ca. 400–600 CE. The inscriptions were translated and interpreted by Dr. Leah Di Segni, and the study of the mosaics was conducted by Dr. Lihi Habas (both of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem). The earliest inscription (415/6 CE), found in the southern aisle, mentions a bishop Heraclius, together with Gainus the priest and Severa the deaconess. The same Heraclius is known as a bishop of Azotus, who attended the Council of Ephesus in 449 CE and the Fourth Ecumenical Council at Chalcedon in 451 CE.

A series of memorial inscriptions for deaconesses and deacons, in roughly equal proportions, were found in the northern aisle of the main church. Two bishops of Ashdod, mentioned in inscriptions elsewhere in the church, are not attested so far in any other known historical source. These inscriptions are dated by a chronological system that uses the millennium of the city of Rome, which was celebrated in 248 CE to mark 1,000 years from the city's traditional foundation date in 753 BCE, as a chronological anchor. This system is very unusual for the region, and it is plausible to assume that it was developed at Ashdod-Yam and possibly later adopted by additional Christian communities.

The church's central apse housed the main altar and a tomb with a single skeleton, probably dating to the Late Roman period. It seems that the entire church complex was built around this tomb, which is believed to have belonged to a saint or martyr. This tomb was the only burial in the church that was not recycled in later times as a mass grave. Many other tombs, discovered beneath rush repairs to the mosaic floors, were clearly turned into mass graves in the 6th century CE and yielded dozens of skeletons covered in lime. The tombs were excavated by Dr. Hila May (Tel Aviv University) and her team. It remains to be seen if this evidence may be connected to the so-called Plague of Justinian.

The complex demonstrates clear signs of destruction around 600 CE and it remains to be explained when and how exactly this destruction took place; however, traces of a possible major earthquake have been identified. Although many Byzantine churches exhibit burials and memorial inscriptions, the amount of texts in the church discovered at Ashdod-Yam and the high number of female ministers mentioned in these inscriptions make it unique. The ministry of female deacons was eliminated in most Christian denominations already in antiquity, but recently there has been growing support among different Christian communities around the world to bring back this ancient order.



The apse of the basilica with the grave of the “saint” and the main altar (photo: Sasha Flit)



Two excavated graves at the southern aisle of the basilica (photo: Sasha Flit)



Drone photo of the excavation team spelling out "Azekah" in ancient Hebrew

The Lautenschläger Tel Azekah Expedition: The 2021 Season

Oded Lipschits, Sabine Kleiman and Manfred Oeming

The ninth season of the Lautenschläger Azekah Expedition took place between July 9 and August 6, 2021, under the direction of Prof. Oded Lipschits (Tel Aviv University), Prof. Manfred Oeming (Heidelberg University) and Dr. Sabine Kleiman (field director, University of Tübingen). The expedition included over 25 students from Tel Aviv University's BA program, 15 students from the International MA Program, over 35 students and volunteers from Charles University (Prague), the University of Tübingen and Heidelberg University, and other students and volunteers. The project was further assisted by expedition ceramicist and registrar Dr. Liora Freud, with the help of Daria Lebin-Graiver, excavation administrator Maddison Quail-Gates and photographer Benjamin Sitzmann (Heidelberg University). Fieldwork was further supported by the services of numismatist Mati Johananoff and of Yinon Horesh and Prof. Manfred Oeming, alongside field administrator Jacob Codu.

Four areas were excavated during the 2021 season. Area A was divided into two areas: Area A (east), under the supervision of Dr. Josef Briffa with the assistance of Itay Sharir and Christoph Wind, and Area A (west) under the supervision of Alexandra Wrathall with the assistance of Daniel Nam. Area E3 continued under the supervision of

Nitsan Shalom, with the assistance of Hannah Ripps and Shahar Gopher, while Area S3 was supervised by Helena Roth with the assistance of Ronnie Sapir. Area W was excavated under the dual supervision of Dr. Abra Spiciarich and Maddison Quail-Gates.

Previous excavation efforts in Area E3 already revealed the remains of massive Middle Bronze Age fortifications on the lower slope, above which an open-space temple was discovered that was ultimately destroyed in the Late Bronze Age III (ca. 12th century BCE). The goals of the 2021 season were to clarify the construction date of the temple and to reveal the structure in its entirety. Work during the season revealed a thick late 12th-century BCE destruction layer, rich with special finds; the remains of five skeletons were uncovered below the collapse. At the end of the season the team discovered three construction phases below the temple, above the fortification wall. The continued clarification of these phases remains a goal for the 2022 season.

Former excavation seasons in Area A revealed settlement remains from the Middle Bronze Age, Late Bronze Age, Iron Age II, Persian and Late Hellenistic/Early Roman periods. Settlement remains include a possible monumental gate



(built with a well-constructed water channel), a building that was destroyed at the end of the Iron Age II, and later Persian period and Late Hellenistic/Early Roman structures. The goal of the season was to expand and expose the Iron Age complex and to further understand the size and settlement plan of the area. In total, 13 new squares were opened with an additional five half-squares. The season revealed a large area that was well built during the Iron IIB (ca. 8th century BCE) and Iron IIC (ca. 7th century BCE), within which a well-preserved and plastered olive-oil press was discovered. Excavation efforts did not reveal the remains of the 586 BCE destruction. The material recovered from the fills above the Iron Age structure include many finds from the 6th century BCE, including a private stamp impression written in Hebrew, as well as additional ceramic finds from the early Persian period.

Area S3 includes the excavation of the modern path that runs east-west on the upper mound. Excavation efforts have already revealed the foundations of the Middle Bronze Age fortifications cut by the road, and our goal was now to continue to expose these foundations and fortifications, in order to better understand their date and position within the overall fortification plan. It was clear that this construction dates to the Middle Bronze Age and was built directly atop the bedrock of the upper mound. It seems that in this area the natural hill sloped toward the southeast (against the southern slope created as part of the MB fortifications). Outside the wall there was a tower, like other known examples from the southwestern corner of the site.

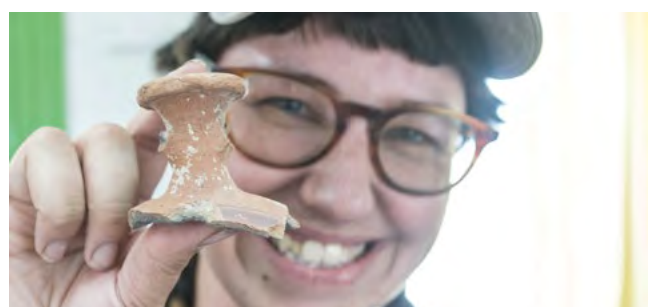
Area W1 is a section in the western slope of the site, the excavation of which has revealed a massive fortification of the Middle Bronze Age, as well as later settlement phases, including an LB II-III potter's workshop (ca. 14th-12th centuries BCE) and remains from the Iron Age II (ca. 9th-8th

centuries BCE) and the Persian period (6th-4th centuries BCE). The goal of this season was to reach and understand the earlier phases of the Late Bronze Age and to try to clarify the location and relationship between the settlement within the confines of the Middle Bronze wall. As such, the season included the continued exposure of the potter's workshop and the discovery of many layers of workable clay. Below these layers we began to expose two Middle Bronze buildings built against the wall and separated by a narrow street.

The team plans to return to the site in July-August 2022. To learn more or register, head to azekah.org.



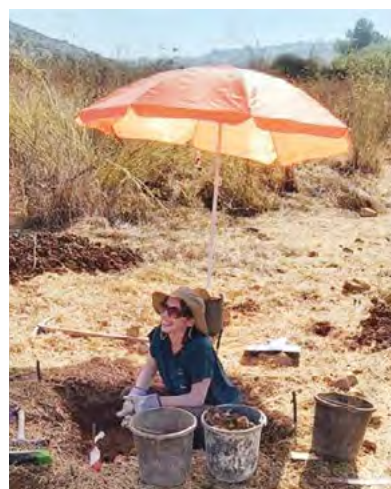
Israeli BA students Noam Levy and Maya Harb with a stone vessel found in Area E3



Area W1 supervisor Maddison Quail-Gates with part of a small flask

Ḥorashim East, 2021

Ella Assaf Shpayer



Clockwise from far left: Yoni Parush and Alex Kulkin during field work; Dr Viviane Slon (Tel Aviv University), co-director of Ḥorashim East excavation during field work; Middle Paleolithic Levallois product of the Mousterian culture

During the autumn of 2021, we carried out the first ever excavation in Ḥorashim East, a newly discovered Middle Paleolithic site in central Israel. Located at the margins of the Ḥorashim Forest along the current course of the Wadi Qana stream, this open-air site was revealed during a thematic prehistoric survey undertaken in 2020 by a joint team from Tel Aviv University and Universidad Autónoma de Madrid. The aim of this survey project was to map the archeological landscape of central-eastern Israel, in order to provide a clearer picture of the diverse settlement patterns in this area during the Palaeolithic period.

Based on the survey, an undisturbed area of ca. 1,000 m², in which hundreds of lithic items were discovered, was chosen for a follow-up test excavation, which is co-directed by Dr. Ella Assaf Shpayer (Tel Aviv University), Prof. Francesca Romagnoli (Universidad Autónoma de Madrid) and Dr. Viviane Slon (Tel Aviv University). Three distinct areas were defined: 1) Area B, an apparent floodplain and the closest to the Qana stream; 2) Area A; and 3) Area C, a hill overlooking the stream. Area C was the focus of our excavation, where nine squares



(1 × 1 m in size) were opened. Here, lithic clusters with a Middle Paleolithic Levallois component were found.

Although preliminary, our analysis of the flint items recovered at the site already highlights two behavioral patterns of interest. First, our finding of cortical flakes of all categories suggests that the decortification phase (the initial stage of knapping, i.e., the removal of cortex from the cobble) took place at the site. Second, we note the use of old, discarded patinated flakes as blanks, despite the abundance of primary and secondary flint sources in the vicinity of the site—these were retouched in a later phase and their active edge was rejuvenated. Various aspects of human behavior at Ḥorashim East, including the type of settlement, will be further investigated through stratigraphic excavation next summer. Nonetheless, the mere identification of this locale is valuable, as only a few open-air settlements are known from the Middle Paleolithic Levant. The discovery of Ḥorashim East sheds new light on human land-use patterns during this period and reinforces the notion that central-eastern Israel was favorable for human settlement throughout the Paleolithic.

Covid ii Domum: The 5th Excavation Season at Masada

Guy D. Stiebel and Boaz Gross



The northern water cistern and the arched rock-cut opening that leads to the cave



The expedition staff and team members at the end of the short season

We thought it would end sooner. After a narrow escape from the pandemic eruption in Israel, which allowed us to complete the 2020 season, we had to postpone the 5th season from February to October 2021 due to restrictions in Israel and abroad. Following much deliberation, we decided to move ahead and to focus the small-scale “boutique season”—as we called it—only on our Area B. With foreign entry to Israel still heavily restricted, we relied mostly on Tel Aviv University students and on students from the International MA Program, alongside several extremely dedicated volunteers.

Area B, which was supervised by International MA program graduate Angela Hodson, is located in the northwestern section of the plateau of Masada, between the synagogue and the Byzantine church, in a shallow natural basin. This area proved to be most apt for the collection of rainwater, as represented by two cisterns that were discovered during the 2017 season.

Of the two cisterns, the northern one was decommissioned and filled with refuse during the Early Roman period (most likely during the Great Revolt), while the southern one was reused during the Byzantine period, as is apparent

from its replastering and the material culture uncovered in the cistern.

The goal of this year’s season was to complete the excavation of the cisterns and to further examine one of the most intriguing discoveries of the expedition: a cave, which predates the northern cistern, as became apparent from a plastered-over arched entrance that was sealed by the cistern’s construction. Discovered in 2019, this cave held a great promise for a rare chance to examine a pre-Herodian architectural feature at Masada, a phase that is known only from historical sources and a limited number of artifacts. However, much like Saul, we went seeking the asses and found a kingdom... This season we went looking for the early settlement phase at Masada, but found in the cave clear indications for the latest. In the plastered cave we have uncovered *in situ* a living horizon that included a rare, complete hand-operated quern. This layer further yielded several broken parts of the Byzantine church’s marble screen. These discoveries provide further evidence of post-Byzantine activity on the mountain, most likely dated to the early Islamic period—a period that was until now unknown at the site. We look forward returning to the mountain in mid-January 2022 to complete, among other things, the uncovering of the cave.

Tel Moza Expedition Project 2021 Season: Excavating an Economic and Cultic Site from the Iron Age II near Jerusalem

Shua Kisilevitz and Oded Lipschits

In the summer of 2021, the second season of the Tel Moza Expedition Project was carried out by students and faculty from Tel Aviv University, Charles University (Prague) and Osnabrück University (Germany), as well as local volunteers. The project is supported by the Gerda Henkel Stiftung (Grant Nos. AZ 65/V/19 and AZ 24/F/20) and the Israel Science Foundation (Grant No. 252/20).

This season, the massive backfills that covered previously excavated parts of the temple were removed for the first time and the eastern part of the area was excavated, revealing the full extent of the temple complex and further exposing its floor and northern bench. The long-awaited western delineation of the temple building was exposed, revealing a massive wall (3 m wide) with a niche set in the center of the northern room. This niche likely served for the placement of cultic artifacts, perhaps statues or stelae representing the gods.

To the east, excavation below a modern terrace revealed the eastern edge and the southern and eastern delineation of the temple courtyard. In all, the temple complex extends nearly 37 m from east to west, comprising the courtyard (ca. 13.7 m) and the temple building (ca. 23.3 m). Since only limited sections of the courtyard surfaces were excavated

in the east, their precise date and consequently the latest phase of the temple complex remain uncertain pending further excavation.

The eastern part of a structure comprising two rooms abutted the southern wall of the temple courtyard. This structure was likely part of the cultic complex and is attributed to the late Iron Age. Its northern room contained a plaster floor with a *tabun* embedded in its northwest corner and fragments of cooking pots and a horse figurine deposited on it, and its southern room contained a stone pavement. A silo excavated directly east of the structure forms the western edge of the Iron IIB–C field of silos excavated in 1993 and indicates the proximity of the cultic and economic sectors. The late Iron Age structure and seemingly also the western silo were cut and covered by Persian-period construction, demonstrating that the site was inhabited after the Babylonian destruction of Jerusalem. North of the temple, the exposure of seven silos west of previously discovered Iron IIA silos reinforces the notion that the Iron Age site began as an economic center and that, following the construction of the temple complex, the economic sector shifted to its eastern part.



Left: the temple complex and the silos to its north and east (orthophoto: Eyal Marco, IAA); right: the 2021 expedition team (photo: David Rafael Moulis); above center: horse figurine found in the building south of the temple courtyard (photo: David Rafael Moulis)

Qadas Village Excavations 2021

Rafael Greenberg



Aerial view of Qadas, with cleared compound and military position in foreground, looking north (photo by Ido Wachtel)



Ground-level view of the southeast compound after cleaning and partial excavation, looking south (photo by Sasha Flit)

The first season of excavations in the village of Qadas in the eastern Upper Galilee, in collaboration with the Tel Qedesh excavations headed by Uri Davidovich and Ido Wachtel (The Hebrew University of Jerusalem), took place in July–August 2021. The field project is headed by Rafi Greenberg (Tel Aviv University) and Gideon Sulimani, who are assisted in the project by Liora Kolska Horwitz (Hebrew University) and Ramez Eid (Open University), students from Tel Aviv University, workers from Sakhnin, and a diverse group of volunteers.

Following a series of field surveys, aerial photos, and LIDAR scanning, our fieldwork focused on a house compound at the southeast corner of the village, a military outpost from the 1948 battles, and a building adjacent to the spring of ‘Ain Qadas at the foot of the village. Part of a larger project concerned with memory and erasure, the excavation aims to retrieve a material archive of the events leading to the depopulation of the village in 1948, to identify later visits to the site, to obtain a detailed understanding of the intentional destruction of the site in 1966 and to observe how village lands have been exploited as an economic, touristic and religious resource in recent years. Our excavations were accompanied by a program of interviews with local inhabitants and with

an ongoing archival project that includes oral histories of Qadas and documents from the periods covered by the excavations.

A first stage of vegetation clearance revealed both the extent of the physical destruction of the village in 1966 and the effect that invasive vegetation has had in obscuring the destroyed houses. Partial removal of collapsed walls revealed courtyards, sheds, and alleyways that had been thoroughly scavenged, leaving behind nothing but broken metal, glass and ceramic objects. The destruction, carried out by mechanical means and supervised by archaeologists (as reflected in documents from the Israel Antiquities Authority archive), was so thorough that walls visible in pre-destruction aerial photos could not always be identified on the ground, while the massive building stones of the village houses were pushed into large piles.

Excavations in a concrete military post, apparently built by the Arab Liberation Army in 1948, revealed not only vivid remains of the 1948 conflict, but evidence for re-use, probably by hunters, in the mid-1970s. Our examination of the spring house and its environs showed evidence of its continuous use by neighboring Jewish settlements, military units, artists and pilgrims to a recently consecrated saint’s tomb.

On the Outskirts of Timna: Excavating near the Yotvata Oasis

Erez Ben-Yosef

The challenging logistics of ancient copper mining in the Timna Valley included the supply of water from a distance of about 20 km away, where the nearest water source, the Yotvata Oasis, is located. Last winter, we continued our exploration in the region between Timna and the oasis, in order to better understand the connection between these two places throughout the different periods of copper exploitation in the valley. Special emphasis was given to the Early Bronze Age, a pronounced period in the investigated landscape with features like desert kites, tumuli and wind-operated copper-smelting furnaces.

Our field work included:

1. Continuation of our pedestrian survey of the region (titled, after the Arabic names of Timna and Yotvata, The Wadi Mana'iyya–Ain Ghadian Regional Survey [MGRS]). In this survey, headed by Assaf Holzer, we discovered more undocumented sites and ancient paths.
2. Excavations of Early Bronze human remains in a massive tumulus at Site 201, with the help of Dr. Hila May (Tel Aviv School of Medicine) and her team of physical anthropologists. A piece of linen shroud was uncovered attached to an upper limb and is now being dated by radiocarbon in order to test our hypothesis that this is an Early Bronze Age burial.
3. Micro-archaeological probing at the early Iron Age fortress of the Yotvata Oasis. These micro-scale excavations were conducted with the help of Dr. Yotam Asscher (Israel Antiquities Authority), with the aim of improving our understanding of the site's function and chronology. We obtained dozens of sediment samples from the early Iron Age phase, as well as from the much earlier Chalcolithic–Early Bronze Age occupation of the hill. We were able to obtain evidence that the unique protective dirt rampart is associated with the early phase of occupation, supporting Ze'ev Meshel's interpretation of this feature.

This year's field work was still under the affliction of the COVID-19 pandemic. Our team was small, except toward



Probing the Yotvata fortress for microarchaeological analysis—the team at the end of the season (note the sampled section on the right)



Excavated Bronze Age tumulus at Site 201 between Timna and Yotvata—the skeleton was found partially wrapped with a linen shroud

the end of the season when hikers joined the survey in order to avoid observing a lockdown at home. Nevertheless, we managed to obtain substantial new materials that will help reveal the history of the region as their investigation continues on campus and in laboratories. This could not have been achieved without the hard work of volunteers and the dedication of field supervisors Willie Ondricek, Mark Cavanagh, Yoav Vaknin and Ilana Peters.

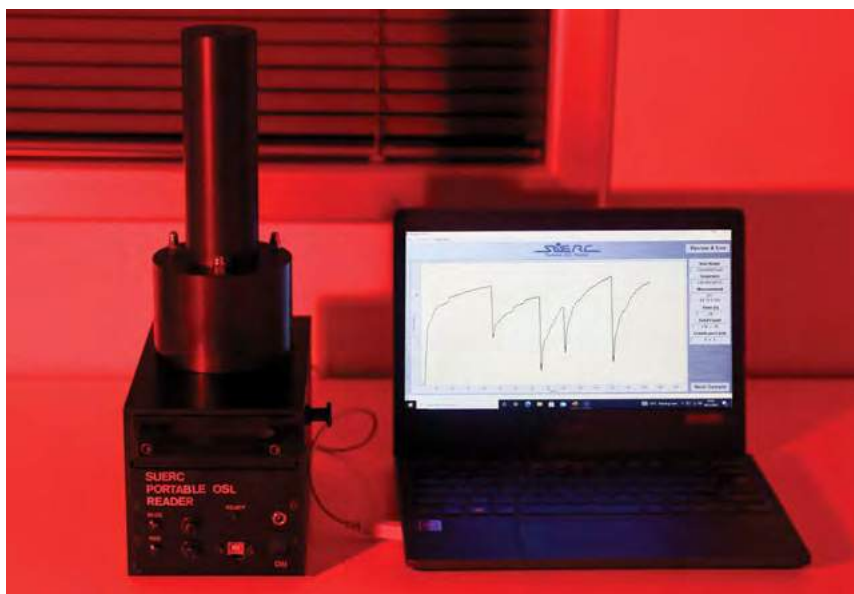
A New Addition to the Field: A Portable OSL Reader

Nitsan Ben-Melech

In the field, we archaeologists are preoccupied with searching for pottery, stones, coins and other types of artifacts. However, soil is the most abundant material to be found at digs, yet this component is mostly ignored. In fact, reconstructing the history of soil deposition at a site, whether as the result of human activity or natural processes, is a fundamental requirement of the archaeological process before any attempt is made to give meaning to the artifacts carried within the soil. The recent acquisition of a Portable OSL (POSL) reader is a significant advancement for the Institute, as it reveals the movement of soils at sites. This field operating device is based on the principals of the OSL (Optically Stimulated Luminescence) method, which dates the last exposure of soils to light. Though the portable reader does not provide absolute dates, it does identify relative dates and provides a quick and basic way to determine sedimentation rates and processes at archaeological sites. The reader is especially helpful in sites without clear stratigraphy and those that are not rich in material culture, such as cultivated slopes and agricultural fields around ancient sites. It is also extremely useful in solving stratigraphic riddles at multilayered tel sites.

In a recent study, we utilized the POSL reader to decipher the sedimentation processes of a tumulus site near Arnona, Jerusalem. The excavation, conducted by the Israel Antiquities Authority, uncovered the massive tumulus and several stages of related architecture. By sampling several sections throughout the site, we were able to identify and point to different sedimentation processes. For example, we identified a layer of a deliberate fill and a layer of a gradual and likely natural accumulation above it. By assessing different sedimentation processes, we were able to choose areas for absolute dating using the OSL

method and show the connection between the soil fills and the architecture in the site. In this case, we learned that the deliberate fill postdated the architecture itself and is connected to the next phase of occupation at the site. The soil profiling of the sections provided by the POSL reader added an additional layer of information that was not available through traditional archaeological tools. The POSL reader is intended to be used alongside the excavation process. It can be used to guide the progression of the excavation, as it offers quick and basic assessments of soil profiles and answers stratigraphic dilemmas.



The Portable OSL reader unit

The reader and its laboratory recently began to operate at the Sonia and Marco Nadler Institute of Archaeology at Tel Aviv University through funding from the Schlindwein Family ND-TAU collaboration grant. Nitsan Ben-Melech will be operating the Portable OSL reader in some of the Institute's summer excavation projects, as well as in the Deir Tantar excavations, a collaboration between our Institute and the University of Notre Dame, Southbend, Indiana.

Spotlight

New Academic Staff
Post-Doctoral Fellows



photo: Sasha Flit

Ella Assaf Shpayer

In the summer of 2021, I became a faculty member of the Department of Archaeology and Ancient Near Eastern Cultures of Tel Aviv University, following my BA studies, my work in the prehistoric laboratory, and then my MA and PhD studies within the department. After thirteen years, these classrooms and familiar corridors have become my second home, thanks to my friends and colleagues in the laboratory, my professors and my supervisors, who have guided me all along my academic development.

From the start, I have been interested in specific groups that are less studied, almost “hidden” from archaeology—women and children—and in finding their possible traces in the archaeological record of the Stone Age. My research focuses on aspects of knowledge transmission and modes of learning in early human societies and tracking these in the archaeological record, specifically stone tools. These phenomena were an essential part of early human lives, just as they are today—yet we have insufficient knowledge about them. In my PhD research, supervised by Prof. Ran Barkai and Prof. Avi Gopher, I developed some interpretive models for defining and typifying prehistoric learning processes, focusing on the site of Qesem Cave, which was inhabited 400,000–200,000 years ago. In this research, I utilized some theoretical-anthropological, as well as evolutionary, models and technological analysis of stone tools. The results showed that the inhabitants of Qesem Cave acquired knowledge in several ways, using mechanisms of self-learning trial and error, as well as knowledge sharing between group members. Later on, I applied my methods to some earlier and later sites. These studies have demonstrated that learning was an integral part of the daily lives of prehistoric humans and that children were active agents in these ancient human societies.

In recent years, I expanded my research and nowadays I explore the influence of socio-cultural factors, e.g., gender and ontology, on learning processes and the transmission of knowledge of stone-tool technology in prehistoric periods.

Lately I have been heading a prehistoric survey project in central eastern Israel, in the course of which a new prehistoric



settlement from the Middle Paleolithic period was discovered: Ḥorashim East (near Naḥal Qana). Following an initial but successful test excavation, more comprehensive excavations took place at the site this year, in which volunteers from our department took part—and thanks to them we came to interesting conclusions within a short time. A second season is expected to take place this fall.

This year I began teaching and found that meeting students is very enriching for me, helping me to better understand the role of archaeologists in the 21st century in general, as well as my own attitudes and aspirations. I am much obliged for this! And I am looking forward to future projects and joint operations with colleagues and students in our department.

Omer Sergi

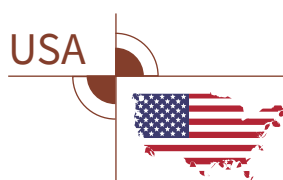


Since childhood I have been fascinated by ancient cultures. Whether through their visible remains or their literary legacy, I was drawn to the unknown world composed of ancient societies. The stories of Homer, the histories of Flavius Josephus, and biblical mythology—all may be seen as intellectual attempts to understand and to explain a chaotic world—drew my curiosity even before I could read. I guess that this had to do with the fact that I grew up in Israel, where the material remains of so many ancient (and not-so-ancient) cultures are visible—in every ruin and tell and even in modern-day city centers; where the ancient past plays an important role in modern-day politics and in day-to-day social life; and where the many cultures and people who have inhabited this land, with their stories, are always present. This is the landscape in which my intellectual curiosity took shape.

Although I started my academic studies in the Faculty of Law at Tel Aviv University, it is hardly any surprise that I ended up studying archaeology and biblical history. It is precisely the contact point between the material remains and the literary legacy of ancient societies that stands at the center of my research interests. This stems partially from an inner drive to dismantle, or at least to understand, the many ancient myths that shape our lives in this country. But, even more so, this is due to the intellectual drive to understand ancient societies through the things they left behind, whether material or textual. In other words, I am fascinated by the gap between how people actually lived and how they wanted us to remember them.

To be sure, I do not believe in historical analogies, nor do I believe that the past has some hidden lesson to teach us today. But I do believe that knowing the past, as well as understanding the different trajectories and threads underlying our modern societies, may provide better context for our own lives and times, and thus helps us deal with the challenges of the present. I consider myself lucky, in the sense that my work—and indeed, my entire way of living (and of making a living)—is based on my natural curiosity, which is also my passion (some might say my obsession) for the ancient cultures of the land and the region. This is why I am so happy to be appointed as an official member of the vibrant and dynamic staff of the Department of Archaeology and Ancient Near Eastern Cultures at Tel Aviv University, which is in my hometown, Tel Aviv. I am looking forward to many new opportunities for further study of past societies and their legacies, while being able not only to accumulate new knowledge, but also to pass it on.

Matthew D. Howland



I received my PhD in anthropology from the University of California San Diego in 2021. My research addresses the relationship between economic interaction and social complexity, especially in the early Iron Age of the Southern Levant. My dissertation focuses specifically on how elites at the early Iron Age site of Khirbat al-Jariya, located in the Faynan region in southern Jordan, leveraged trade networks to develop and maintain power. Khirbat al-Jariya was excavated in 2006 and 2014 as part of the Edom Lowlands Regional Archaeology Project, directed by Prof. Thomas E. Levy and Dr. Mohammad Najjar. The site was part of a regional network of copper-production sites during the early Iron Age that supplied tens of thousands of tons of copper to sites across the southern Levant and Eastern Mediterranean.

My research addresses the exchange networks involving this copper via the study of ceramics recovered from Khirbat al-Jariya. My dissertation demonstrates the existence of a flourishing trade network between the ore districts of the Arabah Valley and the Mediterranean coast via the Negev, through which copper was likely exchanged. From the perspective of Khirbat al-Jariya, evidence for this trade comes from comprehensive ceramic analysis, including the identification of typological parallels between the ceramics of this site and those of nearby Khirbat en-Nahas and other sites in the Negev, as well as from the identification of imports from

the Negev through ceramic petrography conducted on sherds from Khirbat al-Jariya. Moreover, this research illustrates the extent to which elites at the site exploited exclusive access to exchange networks to burnish their own status, leading to increased social complexity in the region. Beyond ceramic study, I am also interested in methods of digital archaeology, including image-based modeling and GIS, which I have used to provide context to intra-site studies.

I am very excited to join the scholarly community at Tel Aviv University as a post-doctoral fellow. I will be working with Prof. Erez Ben-Yosef to apply archaeomagnetic analysis to mudbricks in order to further develop archaeointensity curves in the broader Near East. By selecting burnt mudbricks that have a known date, the magnetic intensity values from these artifacts can serve as anchors for the master curve for contemporaneous objects recovered from within a ~550 km radius. Beyond the utility of these methods for contributing to our ability to apply archaeomagnetic dating in the region, I will also be applying archaeomagnetic and mineralogical analyses to address archaeological questions such as the phasing of structures, site formation processes and production strategies of mudbricks that were intentionally fired before construction. This research is based on collaboration with Prof. Lisa Tauxe (University of California, San Diego) and Dr. Shai Gordin (Ariel University).

Sol Sánchez-Dehesa Galán



I am a post-doctoral fellow at the Sonia and Marco Nadler Institute of Archaeology in 2022, working under the direction of Prof. Ran Barkai.

I am originally from Spain, where I obtained my BA in history at University of Valencia. After an exchange program in Paris, I decided to move to France to specialize in the study of lithic material through the lens of technology. I conducted my MA and PhD degrees at the University of Paris-Nanterre, under the supervision of Dr. Jacques Pelegrin (CNRS, France). My PhD was funded by La Sapienza University, Italy. Inspired by the earliest period of prehistory, I joined the Italo-Spanish Mission at Melka Kunture and Balchit (Ethiopia), directed by Prof. Margherita Mussi (La Sapienza University), a co-supervisor of my doctoral research.

My research focuses on the study of the Acheulean period, which preceded the emergence of *Homo sapiens*. Through

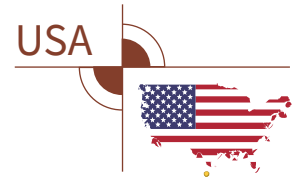
the study of lithic material, I evaluate the cognitive capacities of prehistoric hominins and explore the ways in which innovative ideas appeared and were transmitted prior to the emergence of *Homo sapiens* (*sensu stricto*).

My PhD focused on the Garba I (Melka Kunture) Acheulean assemblage, which is ca. 600,000 years BP. For the study of the lithic material, I developed a novel methodology that involves the critical evaluation of knapping sequences and the identification of the reason and moment of discard (e.g., a technical dead-end, accidental breakage). This approach, combined with morphometric analyses, results in the reduction of stone-tool variability and highlights the eventual technical diversity of Acheulean groups. It also allows for an evaluation of complexity in human behavior.

During my tenure at Tel Aviv University, I will be dealing with the lithic material of Jaljuliya. My project “Late Acheulean Hand-axe Variation: New Insights on Technological and Techno-economical Behavior of Late Acheulean Groups in Israel” will benefit from the methodological background of my thesis and from collaboration with Prof. Ran Barkai. The aim of this research is to produce new information on technological and techno-economical behavior of late Acheulean groups, and to explore the role played by style (culture), function and technical skill (of the knappers) in hand-axe variability.

My integration into the Sonia and Marco Nadler Institute of Archaeology represents a great opportunity to interact with new scholars and to enrich my understanding of the Acheulean material. In addition, I will organize a conference that will bring together archaeologists working in different geographical contexts to present new and traditional perspectives on the study of the hand-axes. This meeting can hopefully lead to future interdisciplinary collaborations, to the filling of current gaps in information on the study of the Acheulean, and to the production of a more complete picture of hominin behavior.





Nadia Ben-Marzouk

As a postdoctoral fellow at the Sonia and Marco Nadler Institute of Archaeology of Tel Aviv University, I am working under the direction of Dr. Ido Koch on the project “Stamp Seals from the Southern Levant: A Multi-faceted Prism for Studying Entangled Histories in an Interdisciplinary Perspective” (SSSL) during the 2021–2022 academic year. The SSSL project is a multi-institutional collaboration between the University of Zurich (Prof. Dr. Christoph Uehlinger), University of Bern (Prof. Dr. Silvia Schroer and Prof. Dr. Stefan Münzer) and Tel Aviv University (Dr. Ido Koch), and comprises an international group of established scholars, post-doctoral fellows, and graduate students in the fields of archaeology, religious history and biblical studies. The overall aim of the SSSL project is to bring innovative and interdisciplinary approaches to the study of stamp seals from the region, allowing for a more nuanced understanding of the sociohistorical entanglements that took place in the southern Levant during the first and second millennia BCE.

My postdoctoral research (2021–2023) deals with the C2 module on the project titled “Local and Regional Profiles and Traditions: Assessment and Comparison.” The objective of this research is to investigate the production and consumption of stamp seals in the southern Levant at different scales of analysis,

allowing for the identification of similarities and differences in the glyptic repertoire across time and space. I am primarily interested in the following questions: What new approaches or questions can we bring to the production and consumption of glyptic in the southern Levant? How can we explain the adoption, adaptation, rejection, (dis)continuation and/or (dis)appearance of certain motifs, materials, seal forms and techniques at the local vs. the regional level? And lastly, in what ways can the study of glyptic allow us to better understand the social, economic and political practices, strategies, identities and beliefs of various communities in the southern Levant? To provide answers to these questions, I employ a multi-scalar approach to the data, utilizing network analysis alongside a communities of practice framework to examine the various ways in which we can use stamp seals to study the nature of interaction between communities at the site vs. at a regional level, the construct of community identity, practice and belief, as well as changes in economic and political systems.

The approach taken in my SSSL research module derives from my broader interest in studying systems of production to explore issues related to power, identity and learning in society. My research in this area examines the various contexts in which production-related knowledge was procured or protected, the identity of producers in their broader community and how new technological practices could result in ideological, economic and political transformations within a community. This work advances previous doctoral research conducted at UCLA, where I obtained my PhD in Levantine archaeology from the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Cultures.

In addition to individual research modules, one of the core objectives of the SSSL project is our development of an open-access online database titled “Corpus of Stamp Seals from the Southern Levant” (CSSL). An avenue of my work is to help build out the CSSL, which will allow for interdisciplinary engagement with the corpus and prove invaluable for future generations studying stamp seals of the region. The opportunity to contribute to a project that will be instrumental for the future of glyptic studies is exciting and gives a sense of lasting purpose to the position. I am looking forward to a productive year with the SSSL team and to the collaborative opportunities our work presents in the department.



Maayan Cohen



I entered the mesmerizing world of Levantine maritime archaeology in 2012, with the guidance of the late Prof. Yaacov (Yak) Kahanov and of Prof. Deborah Cvikel and Dr. Dana Ashkenazi. In my MA thesis, which was titled “The Metal Finds and Concretions from the Early 19th-century Akko Tower Shipwreck,” I used non-destructive and minimally destructive testing to study the metal artifacts. The results assisted in identifying the objects and their manufacturing processes, which in turn suggested a dating of the ship. I graduated *cum laude* from the Department of Maritime Civilizations at the University of Haifa and received the Graduate Studies Dean’s Award for Outstanding MA Thesis. I continued my academic studies at the University of Haifa, with the support of the Natan Rotenstreich scholarship for high-achieving PhD students, gaining a doctorate in ancient ship construction and seamanship in antiquity, supervised by Prof. Deborah Cvikel. During my PhD work, I directed six underwater excavation seasons on the 8th-century CE Ma’agan Mikhael B shipwreck. The challenging conditions of underwater excavations require accuracy, efficiency, troubleshooting and novel thinking. I collaborated with the staff of the Maritime Workshop of the Leon Recanati Institute and supervised 20 volunteer divers each day. At the end of the fieldwork and data collection, the work in the laboratory combined archaeological, metallurgical, technological and historical aspects. The study of the ship’s remains and contents provided information on the first-millennium transition in ship construction, seamanship and sailing routes during late antiquity.

Among the varied finds, 184 copper-lead alloy coins were discovered *in situ*. Metallurgical methods revealed the coins’ composition, microstructure and manufacturing process and determined their date and the origin of their raw material. Based on the portrait of the House of Constantine found on some of the coins, combined with their composition, I was able to date them to the 4th century CE. These coins constituted the small change in circulation during the 4th–6th centuries CE, and in some cases, can also be found in 7th-century contexts.

I recently finished the year-long Mimshak competitive science and policy fellowship program. My service within the public sector in government administration advanced my skills in effective information communication, negotiation, debate and the writing of policy papers. This year in Mimshak has enabled me to examine my strengths and weaknesses, and I am now more certain than ever that my place is in academia.

I look forward to continuing my scientific development and expanding my areas of expertise working with Prof. Oren Tal at Tel Aviv University on Persian-period Palestinian coins. The composition of early Palestinian silver coinage is of interest to numismatists, archaeologists and economic historians, as analyses can help identify mints, the relationships between different coinages, source materials, changes in refining technology and the precise manufacturing processes of different mints.

Cyrielle Mathias



I am a French archaeologist specializing in the Paleolithic period, with a particular interest in stone tool technological analysis. After studying prehistoric archaeology at the Panthéon-Sorbonne and Perpignan Via-Domitia universities, I completed my PhD in 2018 at the Histoire Naturelle de l'Homme Préhistorique (Natural History of the Prehistoric Man) laboratory, under the supervision of Dr. M.-H. Moncel and Dr. S. Grégoire.

My research interests are focused on the Lower to Middle Paleolithic transition in the Mediterranean basin. The aim of my studies is to reconstruct the lithic system employed during the end of the Middle Pleistocene and to highlight the nature of changes leading to the emergence of the Middle Paleolithic societies. For this purpose, I combine several approaches: technological, economical and techno-functional potentialities of stone tools. The concept of *chaîne opératoire* ("operational sequence") is employed as a tool for the reconstruction of technical systems. Thus, my PhD dissertation focused on the initial phases of the Middle Paleolithic in southern France, through a reconstruction of the lithic systems of five sites. The results show that the Middle Paleolithic in this area follows a mosaic pattern, with some evidence for spatio-temporal differences in technical innovations as well as persistence in ancient technologies.

After receiving my PhD, I worked in preventive archaeology and developed several research projects on the emergence of Levallois technology, using both traditional technological analysis and geometric morphometrics (IPH-Paris Young Researcher prize, UPVD foundation funding). In southern France, I am also leading a research program on the Middle Paleolithic in the Hérault department (inventories, study of old collections and new fieldworks), in order to understand the settlement dynamics between two major corridor areas.

As a post-doctoral fellow of the Sonia and Marco Nadler Institute of Archaeology, I will be undertaking research on innovations in stone tool knapping during the Lower Paleolithic, in collaboration with Prof. Ran Barkai. This study will focus on Prepared Core Technologies from the site of Jaljulia, located in central Israel, which constitutes an exceptionally rich lithic collection dated to around 500,000 years ago. Prepared Core Technologies are the first sign of the profound changes taking place in hominin tool-kits during the Lower to Middle Paleolithic transition, with the appearance of Levallois technology. The characterization of these Prepared Core Technologies and their possible link with Levallois technology will help us understand the changes in the lithic record during this period.

Events



Animals of the Past: Human–Non-Human Animal Interactions and the Ancient Near East

Romina Della Casa and Lidar Sapir-Hen | June 21, 2021

14:50 Opening
Session 1: Human-Non-Human Animal Bodies and Substances
Chair: Lidar Sapir-Hen
The Sacrificial Animal in Mesopotamian
Yves Cohen | Tel Aviv University
Animal Sacrifice in First-Millennium Babylonian
Religious Contexts
Ruth De Wit | University of Barcelona
From Animal to Animal: Ritual Spitting and the Absorption
of Evil in Hittite Anatolia
Barbara Deller | Tel Aviv University

16:30 Break

16:45–18:45
Session 2: Human-Non-Human Animal Conceptualizations
Chair: Romina Della Casa
Domestication and the Flattening of the Wild in the Ancient
Near East
Benjamin S. Arubelle | The University of North Carolina at
Chapel Hill
The Hermeneutics of Human-Non-Human Interactions in
Ancient Mesopotamian Literature
Hilke De Zeeuw | University of Vienna
Ailing as Animals: Hybridity in Hittite Cuneiform
Alicia Homan | Centre National de la Recherche
Scientifique, Paris
“Do Not Mourn on the Side of It in Throwing Out the Grave”
Orest. 19.41: Animal Ethics as a Unique Phenomenon in the
Biblical Law
Idan Ben-David | Bar-Ilan University & Oxford Centre for Animal
Ethics

18:45 Break

19:00–20:30
Session 3: Human-Non-Human Animal Materializations
Chair: Arie Spitsch
Hittite and Hittite Animal “Figurines” in Neo-Assyrian
Art
Alicia Homan | Southern Illinois University Carbondale
Animal Materializations as a Window into Social Bonds at
Carchemish
Lindsay J. Day | The University of British Columbia
“Urban-Rural,” “Producer-Consumer,” “Public-Private,”
and “Continuity-Discontinuity” Ruminant and Their Utility
in Zooarchaeological Research: Case Studies from Central
Andean Bronze Age
Lorena Azeiteiro | University of Nevada, Las Vegas

Animals of the Past:
Human-Non-Human
Animal Interactions
and the Ancient
Near East

June 21, 2021
14:50–20:30 (GMT+3)
Live on Zoom



The international conference “Animals of the Past: Human–Non-Human Animal Interactions and the Ancient Near East,” held at Tel Aviv University and streamed online, brought together scholars from Israel, Europe, Canada and the USA, who discussed the theme of the conference within the fields of anthropology, archaeology, Assyriology, Hittitology and biblical studies.

One may consider human curiosity and awe regarding other animals to be timeless and to have had repercussions in many societies worldwide. Yet paradoxically, these encounters—despite their great antiquity—have only become the focus of rich academic discourse over the past few decades. Even though insights stemming from anthropology, archaeology and philosophy have gradually been incorporated into the study of antiquity, they have made only a minor impact in other fields dedicated to the study of the ancient Near East. The goal of this conference was to promote interdisciplinary dialogue and to incentivize new ways of collaboration and debate between different fields of research that share thematic interests.

Reconsidering the Role of Nomads in Ancient Israel and Its World

Erez Ben-Yosef and Zachary Thomas | June 17, 2021

A colloquium titled “Reconsidering the Role of Nomads in Ancient Israel and Its World,” held at Tel Aviv University, was part of an ongoing project to recalibrate approaches to nomadic societies as complex and significant actors in the archaeology of the ancient Levant, following the discoveries of the Central Timna Valley Project. In addition to colleagues from Tel Aviv University and other Israeli institutions, we benefited from the participation of scholars from overseas, including a keynote address by the renowned scholar Prof. Daniel Bodi (Université Paris–Sorbonne). We also had a large audience over Zoom.

Papers presented at the colloquium related to nomadic societies from the Iron Age to the Early Islamic period, with topics covering material culture, the Hebrew Bible and anthropology, as well as comparisons from the broader ancient Near East.

A second colloquium is planned for 2022, in which research on the Levant will be connected to world archaeology with presentations by scholars working on complex nomadic societies in other regions.

Reconsidering
the Role of Nomads
in Ancient Israel
and Its World

June 17th, 2021 | 15:00–20:00
Live on Zoom, Physical Location to Be Announced

15:30 Welcome and Introductory Remarks
Prof. Oded Lipschits | Director of the Institute of Archaeology,
Tel Aviv University

Session 1 – New Archaeological Research on Ancient Nomadic Society and Its Context

15:40 The Archaeology of Nomads in the Arava: A New Paradigm
for the Place of Nomads in the World of Ancient Israel
Prof. Erez Ben-Yosef | Tel Aviv University

16:00 Purple-Dyed Textiles from Timna: Long-Distance Trade in a
Nomadic Society
Dr. Naama Sulem | Israel Antiquities Authority

16:20 Imported Pottery from the Hejaz
Mr. William Oudrick | Tel Aviv University

10 min break

Session 2 – Biblical and Historical Perspectives on Nomads in the Biblical World

16:50 Keynote: Nomads in Ancient Israel from the Perspective of the
Kingdom of Man
Prof. Daniel Bodi | University of Paris

17:30 Who Was Ishmael and Who Were the Ishmaelites?
Prof. Yoram Amit | Tel Aviv University

17:50 Nomads in the Early Islamic Empire
Prof. Gideon Avni | Israel Antiquities Authority / The Hebrew
University of Jerusalem

10 min break

Session 3 – Methodological Reflections on Nomads

18:20 The Agency of “Invisible Peoples” in the Ancient
Southern Levant
Prof. Oystein Laublia | Andrews University

18:40 Respondent: Nomads and the Population
of Ancient Israel
Prof. Avraham Faust | Bar-Ilan University

19:00 Concluding Remarks
Dr. Zachary Thomas and Prof. Erez Ben-Yosef
Tel Aviv University

19:15–20:45 Open discussion among presenters



October 14, 2021

Due to the continued pandemic, the conference, held in the Gilman Building at Tel Aviv University, was also streamed online. It consisted of three sessions: the first session was titled “People, Vessels and Emotions”; the second presented new findings from the excavations of the Institute of Archaeology; and the third dealt with “People, Animals, Faith and Methodology.”



Two guest lecturers will present examples of how the memory of ancestors in other societies is symbolically expressed in the landscape and plays an essential role in identity formation processes and in the way we conceptualize our world. With a wide-ranging program both in time and in space, our Annual Aharoni Day is a key event in the calendar of the Israeli archeological community that continues to present the best scholarship possible.



מתחת להר געש

ארכאולוגיה של חיים בצל אסונות

סמינר מחלקתי תשפ"ב, סמסטר ב'
ימי רביעי 14:15-15:45, גילמן 220
פרופ' אמיר גילן

02.03.22

לי מרדכי | החוג להיסטוריה, האוניברסיטה העברית בירושלים
המגפה היסטורית: קטסטרופה קדם-מודרנית או הערת שוליים בהיסטוריה?

16.03.22

Joseph G. Manning | Department of History, Yale University
Volcanic forcing of the Nile flood regime and its historical implications

30.03.22

דפנה לנגוט | החוג לארכאולוגיה, אוניברסיטת תל אביב
שינויי אקלים והמעבר לחקלאות. אסון או ברכה?

06.04.22

דניאל פוקס | מכון מקדונלד למחקר ארכאולוגי, אוניברסיטת קיימברידג'
העלייה והירידה של עני הגנן המסחרי בחר הגנב הביזנטי: מגפה, שינוי אקלים או שינוי משטר?

11.05.22

Ellen Morris | Department of Classics and Ancient Studies, Barnard College, Columbia University
Of Feasts and Famines: Strategies for Preserving Counterfactual Memory in Ancient Egypt

01.06.22

Vasif Şahoğlu | Department of Archaeology, University of Ankara
Beverly Goodman Tchernov | Department of Marine Geosciences, University of Haifa
Volcanic ash, victims, and tsunami debris from the Late Bronze Age Thera eruption discovered at Çeşme-Bağlararası, Turkey

08.06.22

רותם קובנר | החוג ללימודי אסיה, אוניברסיטת חיפה
חברה בחוסר השלמה: אסונות טבע בימי המבט היסטורי וחברתי

James Gillray, *The eruption of the mountain... with the head of the protector Saint Januarius*, 1794 hand-coloured etching

החוג לארכאולוגיה ותרבויות המזרח הקדום ע"ש יעקב חי אלקוב
המכון לארכאולוגיה ע"ש סוזנה ומרדכי גלד
בית הספר למדעי היהדות וארכאולוגיה ע"ש חיים רחובצר
הפקולטה למדעי הרוח ע"ש לסטר וסאלי אנטון
אוניברסיטת תל אביב

The 2021–2022 Departmental Seminar

Under the Volcano: Archaeology of Life in the Shadow of Disasters

Amir Gilan

The subject of the 2021–2022 departmental seminar is more timely than ever: it is dedicated to the ways past human societies conceptualized, interpreted, grappled with, reacted to and remembered natural catastrophes, such as epidemics, droughts, floods, land submergence, earthquakes, tsunamis and volcanic eruptions.

The first semester began with my presentation on the plague prayers of the Hittite Great King Muršili II, depicting the Hittite king grappling with the gods and arguing against the punishment they afflicted upon his kingdom in the form of a deadly epidemic. Miriam Shefer Mossensohn presented a methodological introduction to the study of catastrophes in the historical disciplines, based on her own research on Ottoman medicine and Muslim environmental history. Yaron Ayalon set out some of the main results of his book *Natural Disasters in the Ottoman Empire: Plague, Famine, and Other Misfortunes*. Both lectures reinforced Ronnie Ellenblum's recent theory of "fragility," according to which climate change

destabilizes societies primarily by creating food shortages and a recurring food crisis lasting only a decade or two might bring a society to the brink of collapse. The "historical" part of the semester was completed by Tzafir Barzilay's lecture on accusations of well poisoning, directed against the Jews during the Black Plague in medieval Europe.

Two lectures dealt with the memories of real and fictitious catastrophes. Patrick Nunn explored various memorable events, such as volcanic eruptions and land submergence, observed thousands of years ago but remembered to this day in oral societies. Nathan Wasserman presented various accounts of the flood and other catastrophes in ancient Mesopotamian literature. Anthropologist Adam Klin Oron's lecture dealt with the present—the flat earth community in Israel and its reaction to the COVID-19 pandemic—but proved highly illuminating to the study of ancient religion as well.

The second part of the seminar will begin in March 2022.

Publications



Our New Editorial Teams

This year, the Editorial Boards of the Institute of Archaeology's various book series and of Tel Aviv Journal have been revamped. We would like to welcome the new teams and wish them productive and fruitful cooperation.

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Tel Aviv: Journal of the Institute of Archaeology of Tel Aviv University

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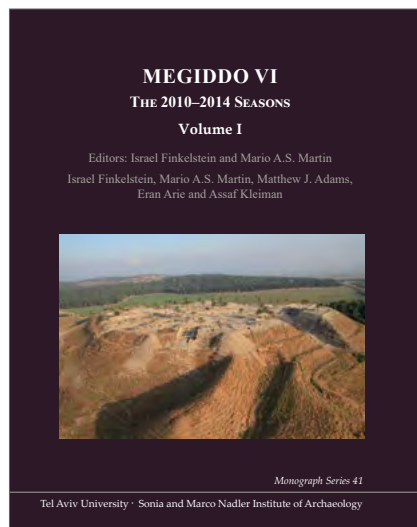
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Monograph Series



Megiddo VI (3 vols.) The 2010–2014 Seasons

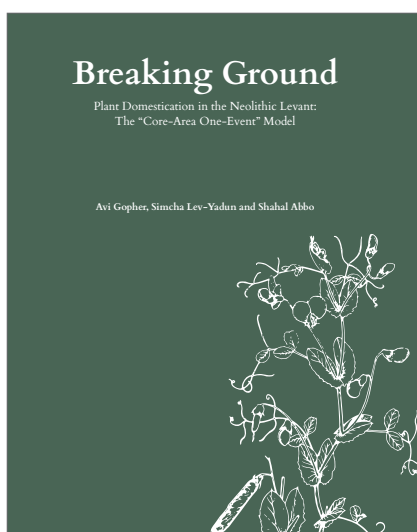
Monograph Series No. 41

Editors: Israel Finkelstein and Mario A.S. Martin

**Israel Finkelstein, Mario A.S. Martin, Matthew J. Adams, Eran Arie
and Assaf Kleiman**

Megiddo, a key site for the study of the Bronze and Iron Ages, is unique among the sites of the ancient Near East. Featuring remains of over 30 settlements, Megiddo is strategically located on the main highway of the Old World, leading from Egypt to Mesopotamia. Hence, it is mentioned in important verses in the Bible and in Egyptian and Assyrian texts. Beyond archaeology, it is of great significance to the fields of the history of ancient Israel and biblical studies. The Tel Aviv University excavations at the site aim, through the implementation of modern methods, at achieving a full stratigraphic-chronological sequence and place special emphasis on studies related to the exact and life sciences. Consequently, the site and the results of the excavations have featured in leading scholarly journals and media channels. The three volumes of *Megiddo VI: The 2010–2014 Seasons* display a rich set of finds, spanning about 1,000 years of history from the Middle Bronze Age to the Iron Age IIB. They include a large number of studies in archaeology and the exact and life sciences, including topics such as radiocarbon dating, geoarchaeology, paleomagnetism and metallurgy.

Occasional Publications



Breaking Ground

**Plant Domestication in the Neolithic Levant:
The “Core-Area One-Event” Model**

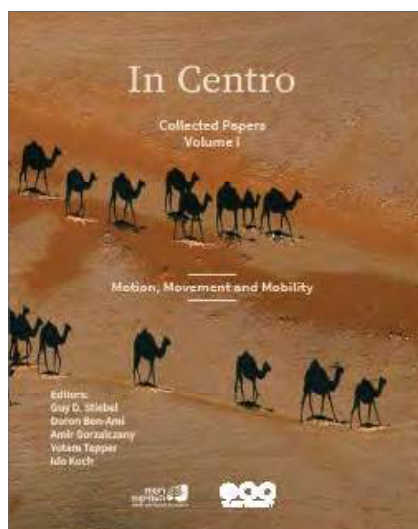
Occasional Publications No. 5

Avi Gopher, Simcha Lev-Yadun and Shahal Abbo

Plant domestication in the Neolithic period, some 10,500 years ago, was a component of the Agricultural Revolution—an immense transformation in human ideology/perception and behavior that changed humanity forever. The Levant is among the world’s oldest primary Neolithic domestication centers, and indeed, domesticated Levantine crops (wheat, barley, pea, lentil, chickpea, faba and flax) currently feed billions of people and are indispensable drivers of global economy. In this book the authors unfurl their claims mainly regarding two aspects of plant domestication—the how and the where. They present a unique model pointing out that plant domestication unfolded as a single, rapid, conscious and knowledge-based episode and that it originated in the northern Levant—and more specifically, in southeastern Turkey and the Middle Euphrates of northern Syria. The “core-area one-event” model advanced here is coherent, shows high parsimony, is based on a minimal number of assumptions and is supported by multiple lines of archaeological-cultural, archaeobotanical, geobotanical, agronomic and genetic evidence.

Proceedings of the *In Centro* Conferences

We are pleased to announce the launch of a new series: the proceedings of the annual conference *In Centro* (במרכז). The conference is the outcome of cooperation between the Central Region of the Israel Antiquities Authorities and the Jacob M. Alcow Department of Archaeology and Ancient Near Eastern Cultures and the Sonia and Marco Nadler Institute of Archaeology of Tel Aviv University. As of 2022, the cooperation will be expanded to include the Martin (Szusz) Department of Land of Israel Studies and Archaeology of Bar-Ilan University. The aim is to focus on one central theme at each annual conference and to examine it through a spectrum of scholarly approaches and in a cross-periods viewpoint and to consider its manifestation in a variety of cultures and geographical locations.

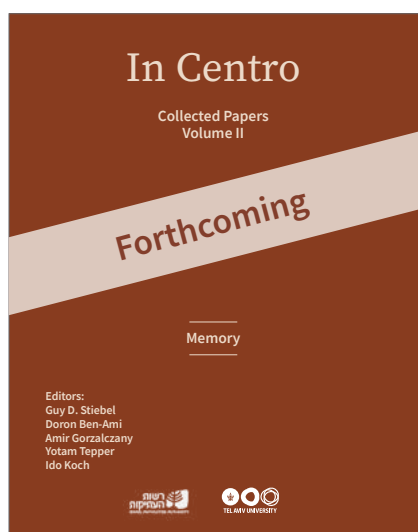


In Centro Collected Papers Volume I

Motion, Movement and Mobility

Editors: Guy D. Stiebel, Doron Ben-Ami, Amir Gorzalczany, Yotam Tepper and Ido Koch

The first annual *In Centro* conference was held by the Central Region of Israel Antiquities Authority, the Department of Archaeology and Near Eastern Cultures and the Institute of Archaeology of Tel Aviv University on April 26, 2018 at Tel Aviv University. It was dedicated to the theme of the “Triple M—Motion, Movement and Mobility,” with contributors discussing aspects of movement of humans and animals, as well as of artifacts, in space and time, against the backdrop of a fundamental comprehension of change as movement in time. This volume consists of eleven papers: six in English and five in Hebrew.

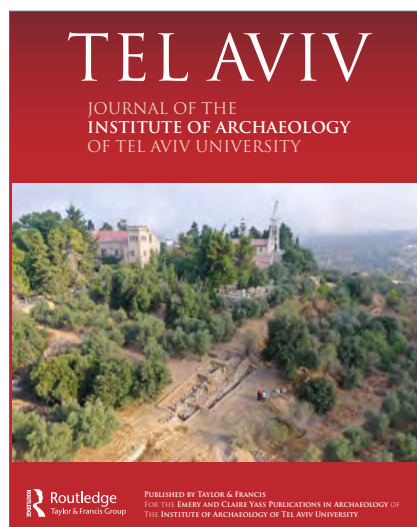


In Centro Collected Papers Volume 2

Memory

Editors: Guy D. Stiebel, Doron Ben-Ami, Amir Gorzalczany, Yotam Tepper and Ido Koch

The second annual *In Centro* conference was held by the Central Region of Israel Antiquities Authority, the Department of Archaeology and Near Eastern Cultures and the Institute of Archaeology of Tel Aviv University on May 29, 2019 at Tel Aviv University. It was devoted to the theme of “Memory” and presented diverse approaches to manifestations of memory in culture and material culture alike. This proceedings volume will contain nine papers, six in English and three in Hebrew, focusing, among other issues, upon the mechanisms of collective and individual memory and discussing examples for the shaping of memory alongside the topography of memory.



Tel Aviv:

Journal of the Institute of Archaeology of Tel Aviv University

Volume 48, No. 1, 2021

In Memoriam: Professor Shlomo Bunimovitz 1952–2020

Yuval Gadot

The Pentateuchal Dietary Proscription against Finless and Scaleless Aquatic Species in Light of Ancient Fish Remains

Yonatan Adler and Omri Lerna

Hoarding at Megiddo in the Late Bronze and Iron I

Erin Hall

Excavations at Kiriath-jearim, 2019: Preliminary Report

Israel Finkelstein, Thomas Römer, Christophe Nicolle, Zachary C. Dunseth, Assaf Kleiman, Juliette Mas, Naomi Porat and Naama Walzer

The Date of Destruction of Gezer Stratum VI

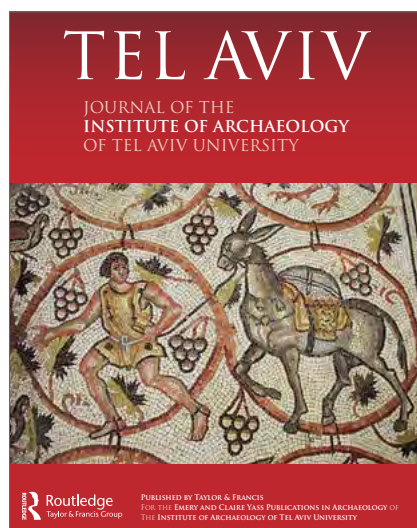
Samuel R. Wolff

Culinary Traditions in the Borderlands of Judah and Edom during the Late Iron Age

Andrew J. Danielson

Jāmi' al-Sittīn—An Early Islamic Mosque near Tel Shiloh

Amichay Schwartz, Reut Livyatan-Ben-Arie and Peretz Reuvan



Tel Aviv:

Journal of the Institute of Archaeology of Tel Aviv University

Volume 48, No. 2, 2021

The Debate on Negev Viticulture and Gaza Wine in Late Antiquity

Daniel Fuks, Gideon Avni and Guy Bar-Oz

Mount Adir: An Iron I Polity in the Upper Galilee?

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Notes on the Rock-Cut 'Space' near the Gihon Spring

Ronny Reich

The Megiddo Gates: Outdated Views versus New Data

Israel Finkelstein and Matthew J. Adams

New Light on Six Inscriptions from Arad

Nadav Na'aman

Vinegar in the Wine Cellar: Food Distribution at Fort Arad 600 BCE

Baruch Rosen and Etan Ayalon

On Two Anthroponyms from the Achaemenid Period

Ran Zadok

A Roman Military Funerary Inscription from the Legionary Base of the VI Ferrata at Legio, Israel

Yotam Tepper, Werner Eck, Greg Leyfirer and Matthew J. Adams

Tel Aviv is available online at www.tandfonline.com/loi/ytav

Other Publications by Faculty Members



Before Us, Over Here

Published in Hebrew by Kinneret, Zmora,
Dvir Publishing House Ltd.

Eyal Halfon and Ran Barkai

In this book we come across flint tools, bones, skulls, surprising structures and layers of earth that we can date to different periods—but they are not the heart of the matter. This book is about human beings and our place in the world—what we have done, where we came from, what other humans used to be here, why they are no longer with us, and why and how our lives have changed. Also: where did we go wrong? What did early humans do because they had no choice, or because they failed to gauge the ramifications of their actions? And what price are we all paying for this today—and will we continue to pay the price in the future?

This journey began over two million years ago in Africa, but the main stations on our tour are almost within walking distance from one another. These geographic points are the gateways to a range of periods and topics in the history of humanity: migration, faith, control of fire, technological innovation, relations with animals and dependence on them, the importance of stones and minerals, conservatism versus the need for perpetual change, death and burial, and even the significance of the human consciousness and its variable states.

Our point of departure is respect for our ancestors—not only because we are abusing the one planet we have, while they took much better care of it, but also for the simple reason that they were here for a very long time. In the course of hundreds of thousands of years they reached every corner of the planet, crossed mountains and valleys, survived grueling ecological crises, and yet never set their sights too high and always made do with what nature had to offer. Here and there, they too, like us, went a little too far. They hunted more than necessary, crafted more and bigger tools than they needed, quarreled with one another—and probably even ate one another. But all in all, when one considers the grand scheme of things—let's say, the two million years of human existence—we must pay our respects to them or, at the very least, learn a thing or two about their stories.