In these challenging and unprecedented times, we continue to work hard. Here is a partial list of our recent accomplishments in recent months.

We were glad to see you at the departmental general meeting that was held on November 22. These meetings are important both academically and for strengthening social resilience.

During the meeting, we asked for your volunteering to create meetings and seminars for the Technion community until the start of the semester. Thank you everyone for the great volunteering. We are happy that the demand was great and all the meetings were impressively filled.

We all hope that we can return to a full routine as soon as possible.

Ohad
Greetings

To Ruhama Ben Anat, the teaching coordinator for being an "outstanding employee" for 2023. Ruhama has been working in the department for about 10 years and is an excellent teaching coordinator with high interpersonal skills. Ruhama has extensive knowledge and multidisciplinary abilities. Congratulations Ruhama!

Welcome:

Research fellows:
- Dr. Hisham Abdulhalim

Guests:
- Dr. Andrey Druzhinin
- Dr. Ekaterina Prozorova
- Mr. Maayan Elyakim (Artist in Residence)
- Dr. Maayan Tsadka (Artist in Residence)

Postdoctoral students:
- Dr. Caterina Scaccia (Italy)

PhD student:
- Shalom Lumor (Ghana)
Typicality Reasoning in Probability, Physics, and Metaphysics
Published by Palgrave Macmillan in the Series New Directions in the Philosophy of Science.

Abstract:
The book provides a comprehensive investigation into the concept of typicality and its significance for physics and the philosophy of science. It identifies typicality as a fundamental way of reasoning, central to how natural laws explain and are tested against phenomena. The book discusses various applications of typicality to foundational questions in physics and beyond.

These include:
- a unified interpretation of objective probabilities in classical mechanics and quantum mechanics
- a detailed discussion of Boltzmann’s statistical mechanics, entropy, and the second law of thermodynamics
- a novel account of the asymmetry of causation and the arrow of time.

Finally, the book turns to the question: “What are laws of nature”? It argues that typicality extends to a powerful way of reasoning in metaphysics that can and should inform our commitments about the fundamental ontology of the world. On this basis, it develops an argument against the Humean best system account, according to which laws of nature are merely an efficient summary of contingent regularities.

Click here
Greetings

ברכות

Yoga in Nature and Natural Props for Yoga offers a highly original exploration – both philosophical and practical – of practicing yoga in nature.

The authors, Dr. Eyal Shifroni, a senior Iyengar yoga teacher, and Ohad Nachtomy, a philosophy professor at Technion, Israel Institute of Technology, and dedicated yoga practitioner, join forces to compose this original book. Drawing on their personal experiences and deep appreciation for practicing yoga in natural surroundings, they explore the profound connection between humanity and the natural world. They strive to convey the unique and transformative effects of practicing yoga in nature.

As practitioners of the Iyengar method of yoga, Eyal and Ohad demonstrate how nature offers a myriad of extraordinary props for enhancing one's yoga practice. They offer insightful suggestions for using the sand on the beach, the trees in the forest, and the rocks in the mountains as natural aids for yoga. By tapping into the inherent qualities of these elements, practitioners can deepen their practice and find new dimensions of support, stability, and inspiration.

The book features plentiful color photographs and detailed instructions that elucidate the use of natural elements as yoga props. It also offers a fine artistic design. The visual guidance combined with clear explanations facilitates and inspires practitioners to incorporate nature's resources into their yoga practice.

Overall, Yoga in Nature and Natural Props for Yoga serves as a valuable resource for yoga enthusiasts seeking to explore the fusion of yoga and the natural world, offering inspiration and practical guidance for practicing amidst the beauty and abundance of nature.

Click here
Osvaldo Ottaviani presented two papers at the XI International Leibniz Congress in Hanover (July 31-August 4, 2023). The second of these two papers, “Botany, Biology, and Metaphysics in Leibniz’s Correspondence with R. C. Wagner”, has already been published in the Congress proceedings.

He also won the VGH Award for Outstanding PhD Theses on Leibniz, a prize offered by the Leibniz Gesellschaft and funded by the VGH Insurance Company. The Prize has been awarded during the Leibniz Congress in Hanover on August 3, 2023. Dr. Ottaviani has been awarded for his doctoral dissertation on Leibniz defended in 2018.

Otaviani presented a paper at the Seventeenth Annual Conference of the Leibniz Society of North America, held at Harvard University in Cambridge, MA, September 29–October 1, 2023. The title of his presentation is “Leibniz on Substance, Subject, and the Absolute”. He has also been invited to join a workshop on degrees, intensions and intensive magnitudes in Leibniz, organized by Jeffrey Elawani and Filippo Costantini at the Laboratoire SPHere, University of Paris 7-Diderot (October 16, 2023).

Dr. Ottaviani has published a paper in “The Leibniz Review”, vol. 32 (“Inside Leibniz’s Metaphysical Laboratory. Two Draft Texts from 1710”), in which he edits and translates for the first time a couple of unpublished philosophical texts by Leibniz, preceded by a long introductory essay. Another research paper on “Leibniz and the Quantification of Body in Medicine” has recently been published as a chapter in the volume The Quantification of Life and Health from the Sixteenth to the Nineteenth Century Intersections of Medicine and Philosophy, edited by S. Guidi and J. Braga, Palgrave Macmillan (October 2023).

From November 2023, he moved to the Radboud University of Nijmegen (Netherlands), with a fellowship funded by the Radboud Excellence Initiative (REI).
A few weeks ago, our article was published in the Journal of Higher Education Management, in which Prof. Orit Hazan and I analyzed Technion's physical education activity during the COVID-19 era, from an organizational point of view. In this article, we demonstrate how the Technion's organizational conduct in this context reflects the values and the importance that the Technion sees in physical education's role in the education of its engineers.

The activity of the physical education unit during times of uncertainty, as detailed above, is built under similar circumstances of COVID-19 era, as discussed in the above article.

What's coming this year? "AIHarmony: Orchestrating Good Amidst Challenges in the Digital Age," a podcast that seeks to comprehensively explore both the positive impacts and challenges of Artificial Intelligence (AI) through rich, insightful conversations with our distinguished professors lead by our Dr. Hisham Abdulhalim. Stay tuned!
Our Research seminar series has opened for the academic year 2023-2024. Dr. Hisham Abdulhalim gave the first seminar:

**Title:** Denied by an (Unexplainable) Algorithm: Teleological Explanations for Algorithmic Decisions Enhance Customer Satisfaction

**Abstract:** Automated algorithmic decision-making has become commonplace, with firms implementing either rule-based or statistical models to determine whether to provide services to customers based on their past behaviors and characteristics. In response, policymakers are pressing firms to explain these algorithmic decisions. However, many of these algorithms are “unexplainable” because they are too complex for humans to understand. Moreover, legal or commercial considerations often preclude explaining algorithmic decision rules. We study consumer responses to goal-oriented, or “teleological,” explanations, which present the purpose or objective of the algorithm without revealing mechanism information that might help customers reverse (or prevent future) service denials. In a field experiment with a technology firm and in several online lab experiments, we demonstrate the effectiveness of teleological explanations and identify conditions when teleological and mechanistic explanations can be equally satisfying. Whereas the epistemic value of explanations is well established, we study how explanations mitigate the negative impact of service denials on customer satisfaction. Yet in situations where companies do not want to, or cannot, reveal the mechanism, we find that teleological explanations create equivalent value through the justifications they may offer. Our results thus show that firms may benefit by offering teleological explanations for unexplainable algorithm behavior, positioning their firms as more ethical than others.

Save the dates for the following seminars:
27.12.23 - Dr. Ekaterina Prozorova
10.1.24 - Dr. Andrei Ed. Druzhinin
24.1.24 - Dr. Eshbal Ratzon

Click here to watch our Research seminar
Every Monday evening a small group of students meets (under my guidance) to discuss a philosophical text that is intrinsically connected to the war we are currently in. So far we have dealt with two texts that express the tensions and challenges of life in war in an apolitical way—the opening passages of Friedrich Nietzsche’s “Schopenhauer as Educator” and Jean-Paul Sartre’s “Existentialism is Humanism.” The selection of these texts is intended to expose, in the discussion, the difficulty of individual expression in a time of war. During wartime, we are often required to belong to a definitive group. This evokes feelings and thoughts that oppose our usual sense of individuality. These texts also articulate the challenges of the modern age and the cultural reality in which we find ourselves.

A useful and effective philosophical discussion requires emotional commitment and authenticity on the part of the readers. I am in awe of the willingness of the participants to share, listen, and think together about difficult and complex issues. I believe that philosophy is of the highest importance in difficult times, and certainly in times of war.
הציורים
בבארי
7/10/2023
מלכ ביבר

אי מצוירים איתי שקרה מה שקרה?

החתולים לייזר היה כמי משח ליווהו בו ובצד אחור וצמצ מפיו סבלתי והמשיכתי את המיתרים הרבות מספר.

לקחתי את הספוג סקיזון שמיטת דירה ספור ספוא, פורקתי ישן ונטעתי עליז בעיסי האיתוחון. כספר מוקדש
לונשו אתו. הנ坯 טענוculatedו איך לספר את כל המתחים. דף לפני הiropr של המרסט בזאאורק היה סוף

דיויק עץ מים, טפתי על הגוותה של הפולק לשדר. פתחא-מלחתה.

הדעדה אתとか חזרתי综合体 ש巅 עשה בדרכ-כל. המレスט של השכنين שמקים שוקחת ביים שמעה ריקה

ושמרתי. הנגרות הכותות שלמים גרמה לי לחריש בחרמון על כאש של השכنين, שניקס זיכרון מומר מפריע לי

ותודרסו ולפריטו.

ויו אתיים המבחנים: זה היה יש פה במער אה שמחה צלולה. או מתויר לעיון הזה? ציוו מחקיק איתי

חיי. צירחי. המק לא מצויר של אוזן השינה הפולה בוחר.

עבה עד כמאים לעיון של הדה. התמונות שהצחיות לייהו, עלות בתות א להתמודדabo צריך: האוליט של

אור זה (ברק אטסן-טסינ), שגילו עד ביר מצים. בפניות המצות הדוקידוק של נורא שיש. וב

שלפני זה על הריכזה. צירחי העיר כי התמונות ממנהציןpliantו. ציוו לעיון ולתחפושת מהום רסית

ואת בואו מצויר. המרנסת של גוריר הפזונ. כל-כן הרבח שלאחרת.

ואת מחתים, בר. הל Xperia של התמונות, ציוו שצויוה את הכנה של צו גרוסמן התתראוב עם שליה זו המחבר.

מזור לעבר צייד בנסן להוגד למחר ה디וק שדר. ציוו הזה לא חכני מראיה. היו התהולו כמיל ציורום

ראשי נטע דבר של๋ה בדרכ, ציוד
ויזאיני, בהם כסימה במקורים, שנים על מים, 25.30, 8/10/23

המרפסט של השכנים ברי האיתוחון, שמי על דיני, 25.30, 7/10/23

הנה דואג, במרס ציוד על פיי, לעיון של איזר, 25.30, 16/10/23

הציור באובי, בצירה קándose, שעין על מים, 9.70, 17/10/23
Dr. Orit Wolf, the founder and artistic director of the "Music, Science, and Inspiration" Concert-Lecture series, is set to launch the second season with four sessions. These sessions will feature distinguished researchers from the Technion community, guest artists, and playing students.

Moreover, Dr. Wolf will uphold the tradition of hosting Open Master Classes at the department’s theatre. These classes provide a valuable opportunity for students from all faculties to perform, engage with others, and receive constructive musical feedback. The upcoming Master Class is scheduled for Wednesday, December 20th, from 11:00 to 12:30.

This month, Dr. Wolf has been notified that she will be a recipient of the Rabinovitch Foundation for her project "Nocturnes for Israeli Poems." This project involves composing seven songs, each inspired by the work of a renowned Israeli poet.
Physical education activities for Technion staff at times of uncertainty

Due to the postponement of the start of the academic year, the physical education unit has built a full class program for the sake of all Technion units, which takes place at our sports complex.

The purpose of the program, which was opened on November 19th, is to allow Technion staff to be active as a group during those turbulent times, in a pleasant and calm atmosphere.

The program includes face-to-face elective classes in a variety of topics: Pilates, TRX, Yoga, Ball Games, gym, Swimming, Racewalking, Stretching and Relaxation, Aquaforza, and more.

The classes were taught by teachers of the physical education unit (Department of Humanistic Studies and Arts). In addition to this, we resumed all regular physical education courses, intended for academic and administrative staff.
Meeting Room
The meeting room of the department was opened in October for the benefit of the academic and administrative staff of the department.

Dr. Tzipora Rakadzon Lab.
Tzipora’s Lab was opened in October and will house Tzipora’s staff.

Construction works that will start soon
- Replacement of old windows - south facade
- Construction of a laboratory for Dr. Enrico Piergiacomi
- Construction of a laboratory for Dr. Avigail Fredman

Retirement
We celebrated the retirement of Brigitte Hahn-Michaeli after many years in the department.

We want to thank her for a wonderful time and wish her the best of luck in her new path.
Brigita will continue to teach German courses in the department starting from the spring semester.

We wish success to Dr. Penina Rosenberg and Betty Kosovsky upon their retirement and thank them for all the years they taught in the department.
Volunteer activities

Picks olives | מטיק זיתים

Activities for people evacuated from their homes | מבשלים לאנשים שаются מביתם

humanities.technion.ac.il

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