

Short CV & Research

Hanoch Ben-Yami

Affiliation

Professor, Department of Philosophy, Central European University (CEU), 9 Nádor Street, 1051 Budapest, Hungary.

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Career History

2005-Present CEU, Department of Philosophy, first Associate Professor and from August 2009 Professor

1996-2004 Tel-Aviv University (TAU), Philosophy Department, first Instructor and from 1998 Lecturer

Education

TAU, Philosophy Department, PhD, 1 June 1995

TAU, Philosophy Department, MA, 10 Oct. 1989

The Hebrew University, Mathematics & Physics, BSc, 1 Sep. 1983

Academic and Professional Awards

2019 DAAD (German Academic Exchange Service) Scholarship for Research Stays for University Academics and Scientists, for a research stay at Universität München (LMU), April to July

2019 Senior Fellowship at the Edelstein Center, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, January & February

1998 The Alon Fellowship, for lectureship at Tel-Aviv University

1995-1996 The Rothschild Fellowship, for postdoctoral study and research work at The Queen's College, Oxford University

1994-1995 The British Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) – Tel-Aviv University Chevening Fellowship, for postdoctoral study and research work at The Queen's College, Oxford University

Research

My current research falls into a few areas.

- I have developed a new, powerful system of logic, which I call the Quantified Argument Calculus. Some of its ideas are contained already in my 2004 book, *Logic & Natural Language: On Plural Reference and Its Semantic and Logical Significance*. However, the system has gone through significant developments and modifications since, including a development of a rigorous and elegant formal system. A paper I published in the *Review of Symbolic Logic* in 2014 contains its most up-to-date presentation. My system is closer to the logic of Natural Language than is the Predicate Calculus or any system building on it. In the publications mentioned and in others I have also compared my system to others found in the literature (generalised quantifiers, plural quantification), applied it to modal logic, discussed the possibility of higher-level plurals, and more. I continue developing my system, and by now several other philosophers have worked and published on it as well, extending it in various ways and applying it to the study of other logics.
- I have recently published a book on Descartes, *Descartes' Philosophical Revolution: A Reassessment* (Palgrave 2015). In the book, I reassess the way Descartes developed and justified some of his revolutionary philosophical ideas. The first part of the book shows that one of Descartes' most innovative and influential ideas was that of representation without resemblance. I show how Descartes transferred insights originating in his work on analytic geometry to his theory of perception. The second part shows how Descartes was influenced by the technology of the period, notably clockwork automata, in holding life to be a mechanical phenomenon, reducing the soul to the mind and considering it immaterial. I explore the later role of another technological breakthrough, the digital computer, in Turing's criticism of Descartes' ideas. The last part discusses the *Meditations*: far from starting everything afresh without presupposing anything that can be doubted, Descartes' innovations in the dream argument, the *cogito* and elsewhere are modifications of old ideas based upon considerations issuing from his separately developed theories, formed under the influence of the technology, mathematics and science of his age. The book received a favourable review in the TLS by John Cottingham. I intend to extend my discussion of some of the book's subjects in a few papers.
- In 2005 I published a paper on simultaneity in Special Relativity (SR). Since then I have been working on several related issues: becoming in SR, alternative conceptions of simultaneity and their implications, the impossibility of backward causation and of time travel, and more. Some of this is work-in-progress while some has already been published. I have also started working on related issues in Quantum Mechanics.
- I have recently started a project of a collection of critical essays on Kripke's work. A few of these have been published, but most are new, and some of those published I shall extensively revise. I hope to publish this collection in a few years.
- A longer-term project that I recently started is work on direct perception. I have published little on the subject, but I have been engaged with it in research and teaching for many years. I have started delivering talks on various aspects of my work. This is intended to culminate in a book, which will probably take me some years to finish.
- Other bits and pieces include work on vagueness, Wittgenstein, the infinite, voluntary action, truth-valuational approach to logic... For more information, see [my Publications List](#).