New research by an international group of Israeli-led academics has given us clues to the history of early agriculture—and that its origins may lie in what is now Israel. Prof. Tzion Fahima, Director of the Institute of Evolution and Prof. Ehud Weiss of the Department of Land of Israel Studies and Archaeology at Bar Ilan University, led an international study which succeeded in mapping the genome of 6000 year old pearl barley grains. Findings revealed clues to barley domestication, which was a key part of the agricultural revolution which turned our ancestors from hunter gatherers into farmers in settled societies. The study published in the journal *Nature Genetics* also found that the domestication of barley is likely to have taken place in Israel, in the northern Jordan Valley and Upper Galilee region. The press has shown a great deal of interest, with reports in "Haaretz", *Jerusalem Post*, *BBC News*, the *Times of Israel*, and more.
At a recent event in Los Angeles organized by the American Society of the University of Haifa, Prof. Sharon Poliakine of the Department of Fine Arts, who is herself a well-respected artist, discussed the arts in Israel with Dr. Sharon Nazarian, member of the Board of Governors and Chair of the West Coast Steering Committee. Friends of the School of the Arts Mr. and Mrs. Stanley and Ilene Gold generously opened their home for the occasion, and were joined by longtime University benefactors Mrs. Herta Amir, Mr. and Mrs. Younes and Soraya Nazarian as well as member of the West Coast Steering Committee Mr. Alan Sieroty, among others. The assembled group listened with interest to Prof. Poliakine's first-hand account of the role of the School of the Arts in the growing vibrant arts culture in Haifa and the North of Israel.

The Polish right wing have demanded the exhumation of a mass grave of Jewish victims killed 75 years ago in the Polish town of Jedwabne – to try to prove that the Germans, and not the Poles, were responsible. Some believe it was the Polish people who perpetrated the massacre. Prof. Sara Bender, a specialist in Polish Jewry and the Holocaust from the Department of Jewish History commented on the issue in Haaretz “This is a political matter. It’s simply very hard for Poland to accept this guilt and the fact that those who initiated the massacre at Jedwabne and the villages, towns and cities throughout Poland were the Poles themselves....The issue has already been proved in studies, testimonies and documents,” Prof. Bender added that the people in Jedwabne even admit that residents committed the murders, and that it was, tragically, not an unusual incident.

At a period of increasing terrorist incidents across the world, the timing of the recent symposium of the Minerva Center for the Rule of Law Under Extreme Conditions seemed particularly appropriate. Constitutionalism Under Extreme Conditions’ (click for more details) was organized in collaboration with the Boston College Law School and the Israeli Association of Public Law. The 40 participants represented countries from across the globe, with participants representing a diverse range of different aspects of the field, including academics from Britain, USA, Germany, Turkey and Greece – and more. Former President of the Israeli Supreme Court, Aharon Barak gave the guest lecture on ‘Human Rights in Times of Terrorism: the Judicial Point of View’, while other subjects included constitution-making, financial and economic crises and political emergencies.

Prof. Shmuel Gal, from the Department of Statistics at the Herta and Paul Amir Faculty of Social Sciences recently took part in an international workshop at the Lorentz Center in the Netherlands. The Center focusses on workshops for collaborations and interactions between international scientists. The workshop, entitled Search Games: Theory and Algorithms, included a plenary lecture by Prof. Gal on search and pursuit games. These ‘predator versus prey’ games mirror what exists in nature and are being researched by leading biologists using mathematical analysis.
International members of the Society of the Study of the Crusades and the Latin East have chosen Prof. Adrian Boas of the Department of the Land of Israel Studies and the Department of Archeology (at the Faculty of the Humanities) as their new President, in at a conference in Copenhagen. The Society brings together academics from 41 different countries to participate in international conferences and share the latest information on research on the Crusader era, through the Society’s bulletin and the prestigious Crusades Journal.

Prof. Gabi Weimann of the Department of Communication at the Herta and Paul Amir Faculty of Social Sciences has again been interviewed in the newspapers. In the Globe and Mail he discussed the phenomenon of the Lone Wolf Terrorist influenced by the internet (mentioned in last week’s At a Glance). Prof. Weimann also commented on social media in an article on the Bloomberg Website, and its use hand in hand with old media in a very powerful way in helping President Erdogan in the recent coup in Turkey.