Yaalon’s field trip to Uherské Hradiště in the Vienna Valley of the Czech Republic, the medieval village that was Yaalon’s boyhood and family home.

Yaalon was a prolific publisher in prestigious science journals and also published maps, books, letters to the editor, scientific notes, encyclopedia articles, and conference proceedings in English, German, and Hebrew.

Thinking on Soils Crosses Spatial, Temporal Scales

The spatial scale at which Yaalon thought about soils ranged from the micro-, across the meso-, to the macro-scale. At the micro-scale, Yaalon and his students worked on exchangeable K⁺ and NH₄⁺, palygorskite formation, and the micromorphology of gypsum, halite, grain cutans, and fabrics of carbonate nodules. At the meso-scale, they worked on microbiotic crusts, shrinking and swelling properties in Vertisols, using fluorescent dyes as tracers, horizons of pedogenic carbonate development, soil classification, paleosol classification, and catenary relationships. At the macro-scale, they published on geomorphic processes and landscape evolution, patterns of desert loess, trajectories of Sahara Desert dust, soils of Israel, and Terra Rossa soils around the Mediterranean.

Yaalon’s thinking about soils likewise crossed temporal scales, ranging from how paleosols (both relict and buried) provide information for environmental reconstructions and for understanding paleoclimatic changes over time. His ideas about dynamic and slowly adjusting persistent soil features and about polygenesis and soils as palimpsests were topics of interest to Yaalon from early to late in life. Even in the last three years of his life, Yaalon was a strong co-author of papers in hydrology, soils, and earth science journals, papers that ranged from technical science papers to historical and philosophical perspectives.

In sum, Yaalon’s thinking about soil science as a discipline was a large and diverse contribution. His work on the history and current state of soil science helps us understand the evolution of our science. Throughout his career, he was interested in soil as a system and a body that had relations to geology, hydrology, biology, and humankind. The “Critical Zone” and the “Anthropocene” were interwoven in his work before these terms were coined. Scholars working in these fields today are able to see much further thanks to the shoulders of Dan Yaalon on which we stand.

D. Richter, Duke University; C. Monger, New Mexico State University and USDA-NRCS; and E. Brevik, Dickinson State University

Consider Organizing an ASA-Sponsored Specialized Conference

We all enjoy the ASA, CSSA, and SSSA International Annual Meeting where diverse topics are presented with national and international appeal, but there is a need for more specialized conferences where topics can be focused for in-depth consideration in a smaller venue. In the past, the Societies have had successful regional conferences on topics such as nitrogen use efficiency, on-site wastewater, and global soil security.

Please consider organizing an ASA-sponsored specialized conference for 2016–2017 and submitting a one-page proposal to the A733 Agronomic Conference Planning Committee at least eight months prior to when you plan to hold the conference. In the proposal, please include:

- Title of the conference
- Month, year, and location (city, state, or region) for the conference
- Description of the subject—why it’s important and timely
- Would speakers be invited, volunteers, or both?
- Names of ASA sections and/or communities likely to attend
- Would members of CSSA and/or SSSA likely attend? If so, what divisions?
- Estimated total number of attendees at the conference
- Likely person or committee planning and facilitating this specialized conference
- Proposal submitter’s contact information

Please realize these conferences need to be funded by the registration fees collected from participants. ASA doesn’t have funding available to subsidize the specialized conferences, so whoever facilitates the conference will need to maintain a budget and assure it is self-funded from registration fees collected and/or sponsorships. ASA headquarters will assist in managing the budget. Facilitating such a conference is an excellent method for you to demonstrate your leadership and administrative skills outside of your daily employment while serving our industry at large.

Thank you for considering this valuable opportunity for focused conversations on important topics and improved networking opportunities for our members. If you have questions or want to submit a one-page proposal, please send them to your ASA Program Planning Officer, Darin Lickfeldt, at dllickfeldt@gmail.com or call 317-518-4573.

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