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Max Wertheimer MINERVA Center for Cognitive Processes and Human Performance

Report of the 10th Advisory Council Meeting

The 10th Advisory Council Meeting took place in Haifa from 08 – 10 March 2015. It was the first meeting after the successful external evaluation of the center which took place in 2013 and which led to the decision to prolong the lifetime of the center for another six years until 2019. It further was the first meeting of the new Advisory Council.

The meeting started on Sunday, 08 March with a scientific colloquium at the University of Haifa. During this colloquium three of the members from the University of Haifa, i.e. Ruth Kimchi, Yaffa Yeshurun and Asher Koriat, presented their recent research together with doctoral students. This was followed in the afternoon by brief presentations of research projects from master students and other doctoral students who currently work in the center. A second colloquium was held on Monday, 09 March 2015 at the Technion, and included scientific presentations of all PIs from the Technion, i.e. Ido Erev, Daniel Gopher and Eldad Yechiam, supported again by doctoral and/or master students. Also this colloquium was followed by brief presentations of students' research projects in the afternoon.

The Council's formal meeting took place on Tuesday morning, 10 March 2015. This meeting comprised an internal discussion of the members of the Council, as well as a closing

meeting with the directors of the Center, Prof. Dr. Ruth Kimchi (Haifa University) and Prof. Dr. Ido Erev (Technion). The three German members of the Council,

- **Prof. Dr. Dietrich Manzey** (Council Chair, Department of Psychology and Ergonomics, Berlin Institute of Technology),
- **Prof. Dr. Ralph Hertwig** (Center for Adaptive Rationality, Max Planck Institute for Human Development, Berlin),
- **Prof. Dr. Michael Herzog** (Laboratory of Psychophysics, Ecole Polytechnique Fédéral de Lausanne, Lausanne Switzerland),

and the Israeli members, **Prof. Dr. Uri Leron** and **Prof. Dr. Daniel Algom**, participated in the symposia and the students' presentations at University of Haifa and Technion, as well as the internal discussion and closing meeting. Because of other obligations, **Prof. Dr. Kobi Rosenblum** only attended the two colloquia and the internal discussion and closing meeting.

This report is based on the following sources:

- The Center's Report of Activities 01/10/2012 – 30/09/2014 (see attachment). This report also includes the fiscal reports for the periods 10/2013-09/2014 and the budget proposals for the periods 10/2014 – 09/2015, and 10/2015 – 09/2016.
- Impressions from the symposia and site visits at University of Haifa and Technion.
- Extensive discussions with the two directors of the center (Prof. Ido Erev, Prof. Ruth Kimchi) and all other active principal investigators of the center who have attended the meeting.

Based on these sources the Council agreed on the following conclusions.

1.

The *Max-Wertheimer Center of Cognitive Processes and Human Performance* continues to represent a very productive scientific center with a high international visibility and reputation in the field of cognitive psychology and human factors. As in the previous years, the sub-center at the University of Haifa has focused on research on attention, perception, and meta-cognition, with an emphasis more on basic than on applied research. The research conducted at the Technion mainly has comprised basic research on human decision-making, as well as theory-guided human factors research.

Considering only publications since 2012, the eight PIs of the center have published a total of 46 articles in scientific journals, and this list is complemented by a number of book chapters, as well as numerous contributions to international conferences. Among the publications are a number of articles published in some of the most prestigious journals in the field of cognitive psychology and human factors. Even though not all of these publications might be considered as direct results of the research activity within the center alone, they nevertheless document the excellent scientific level and productivity of the center's members.

2.

The members of the center were again successful in raising additional funds. This is reflected in a total of four new projects which were acquired since the last report in 2012. These include three projects funded by the Israeli Science Foundation and one project funded by the US-Israel Binational Science Foundation. Together with other ongoing projects the members of

the center currently conduct a total of 14 projects based on grants from other sources. As with the publications, not all of this success in acquisition of grants can be directly considered as results of the activities with the center alone. Yet, there can be no doubt that the money provided by the Minerva Foundation has contributed significantly to this success.

3.

As for the past, only few if any of the publications of the past 2.5 years represent collaborative work from members of the two sub-centers. However, the attendance and discussions during the symposia has provided evidence for a lively cooperative relationship between the two sub-centers. This, in particular, has again become evident from the fruitful scientific discussions during the symposia, which made clear that members of both sub-centers benefit from being part of a common Minerva Center. Although the members focus on different scientific targets, they all follow a similar scientific approach, characterized by strongly theory-guided experimental research.

4.

Both sub-centers have continued to successfully incorporate doctoral and master students in their projects. During the budget period 10/2013 to 09/2014 a total of 10 scholarships were provided to doctoral students (four at University of Haifa and six at Technion), and the same number has been included in the budget proposals of the upcoming years. Furthermore, a number of master students work on projects associated with the center. The Council was very pleased by the presentations of the students which were of impressive quality. From their presentations it became obvious that the members of the center put much effort in educating and coaching young scientist. The members of the Advisory Council expressed their wish to have more time during the next meeting of the Council dedicated to discussions with the students. It has been suggested and strongly supported by the two heads of the center to change the format of the next meeting accordingly.

5.

A number of new bilateral scientific cooperations between members of the center and German scientists have been established during the past three years. The Council was particularly pleased to see that some of these new cooperations were established by the most recent members of the center, Prof. Yaffa Yeshurun (University of Haifa) and Prof. Eldad Yechiam (Technion). In addition, a total of five Minerva Workshops were organized during the past two years by Prof. Ido Erev, with German participants from the Universities of Bonn, Bremen, Heidelberg and Mannheim, the Technical University of Aachen and the Max-Planck-Institute for Human Development, Berlin. This testifies that the members of the Max-Wertheimer Center do not only consider their center as a source of seed money but also as a platform to establish scientific cooperation with German colleagues.

6.

Overall, the Advisory Council considers the scientific achievements and activities of the center as outstanding and the use of the seed money provided through the Minerva Foundation as exemplary.

7.

The Advisory Council took the following formal decisions:

- The Report of Activities 1/10/2012 – 30/09/2014 is fully approved
- The Fiscal Reports for the period 1/10/2013-30/09/2014 is fully approved
- The Budget Proposals for 1/10/2014-30/09/2015 is fully approved.
- The Budget Proposal for 1/10/2015 – 30/09/2016 is fully approved

These decisions were taken in accordance with all Council members who participated in the Council meeting.

8.

The Advisory Council gave its unanimous consent to this report.

Berlin, 23/04/15



Prof. Dr. Dietrich Manzey