

ICCI Education Center
43 Emek Refaim, Suite 22-23 POB 8771, Jerusalem 91086
Tel: 972-2-561-1899, Fax: 972-2-563 4148
E-mail: communications@icci.org.il, Web: www.icci.org.il

ICCI INSIGHTS & INFORMATION

July 15, 2010 | 4 Av, 5770 | 4 Sha'ban, 1431

Dear friends,

During the past few weeks, I have taken three groups from abroad on study tours to Israeli Arab villages and cities to learn about "Islam in Israel". Each of these experiences has been fascinating and enlightening, and they have opened people's eyes and ears to the diversity of Islamic identity in Israel today.



Israeli Muslims have a four-part identity: they are Muslims by religion, Arab by language and culture, Palestinian by nationality and Israeli by citizenship. Each person balances these four components of his or her identity in different ways, and adds to it issues of gender and geography. In short, one can say with certainty that Israeli Muslims are a variegated and multi-faceted group.

On the one hand, I have found that people from abroad are largely ignorant of this subject. On the other hand, they are thirsting for more knowledge and more acquaintance with this part of our citizenry in Israel, which is a very positive sign. Just the other day, forty rabbis from North America, who are studying at the Shalom Hartman Institute in Jerusalem this summer, joined me for a full day study tour on this subject.

If you are interested in knowing more about this subject, you can read my article on Muslim diversity in Israel* or simply be in touch with me via e-mail.

Sincerely,



Dr. Ron Kronish, rabbi
Director, ICCI
rkronish@icci.org.il

* [http://icci.org.il/downloads/Muslim_diversity_in_Israel_\(Kronish_Arch\).pdf](http://icci.org.il/downloads/Muslim_diversity_in_Israel_(Kronish_Arch).pdf)

UPCOMING EVENT

Dialogue in the Midst of Conflict: ICCI training workshop for facilitators, September 14-15, 2010

On September 14-15, 2010, ICCI will be holding a two-day workshop (9:00-17:00 each day) in Jerusalem, entitled "**Dialogue in the Midst of Conflict – Reflective Training for Facilitators**". The workshop will feature a staff of international professionals in the field of group facilitation, hailing from:

- **St. Ethelburga's Centre for Reconciliation and Peace**, London (<http://stethelburgas.org>)
- **The Corrymeela Community**, Northern Ireland (<http://www.corrymeela.org>)

Working together, ICCI, St. Ethelburga's and Corrymeela have developed a training methodology representing the commonalities in our three approaches. For information about course contents and costs, please see the course flyer on ICCI's website:

http://icci.org.il/downloads/ICCI_Training_Workshop-September2010.pdf.

Space is limited and reservations are required.

Please contact Rakheli Hever at communications@icci.org.il to register.

SPECIAL EVENT

ICCI's Annual General Meeting, June 10, 2010



The 19th **Annual General Meeting** of the ICCI took place on June 10th, 2010, at the courtyard of the **Swedish Theological Institute** (HaNevi'im 58, Jerusalem, see image by [DMY](#) to the left). A new Board of Directors was elected and the financial and narrative reports for 2009 were approved. In the public part of the program, **Deputy Mayor of Jerusalem, Naomi Tzur**, spoke about "Heavenly Jerusalem and Earthly Jerusalem". In her lecture, she stressed the fact that religious institutions and leaders can play a significant role in making this city a better place in the

future. Additionally, Ms. Tzur announced that the **Jerusalem Municipality** will be involved in a new international project called "**Jerusalem as a Pilgrim City**", and invited ICCI to participate in thinking and planning for this new project. Furthermore, she told the assembly about the projected reconstruction of HaNevi'im street, "one of the great treasures of Jerusalem", which will turn it into a "cultural paradise". The two projects Ms. Tzur described are related to one another, as HaNevi'im street will become the end point of a projected pilgrimage route beginning at the Dead Sea and going through the Kidron Valley.

ONGOING PROGRAMS

Between Memory and Reconciliation

The **Between Memory and Reconciliation** program, funded by the **Rissho Kosei-Kai** organization of Japan and coordinated by **Avigail Moshe** and **Wasim Biroumi**, brings together Jewish and Palestinian young adults—all Israeli citizens—for dialogue and action, including seminars with Japanese Buddhist students, in Israel and in Japan.

On June 10, 2010, the program participants invited the public to a special art exhibition, entitled "**Encounter: Israeli-Palestinian Dialogue**". The exhibition, displayed at the **Jerusalem Inter-Cultural Center**, featured painted, photographic, plastic and cinematic art pieces created by the participants. The thoughtful, well-laid-out exhibition raised interest and received praise from the attendants (some 50

people). One of the pieces was a poetic short film by participant **Sabra Abu El Hija** and her sister, which engaged many people in conversation about what it meant.

The Jerusalem Interreligious Young Adult Forum (JIYAF)

On Thursday, June 22, 2010, the third cycle JIYAF (2009-2010) completed its activities with a final, reflective meeting, in which the participants attempted, with the help of group facilitators **Mariam Abad Alda'im** and **Yael Yechieli**, to summarize the experience of taking part in the program and to reflect on the lessons that they take with them for the future. **Ms. Linda Slutzky** attended this meeting as a representative of the **U.S. State Department's American Center** in Jerusalem, which awarded a grant to the program this year.



Having completed the program, JIYAF alumni often continue to engage in interreligious dialogue and action via various programs. Indeed, three of the participants of the current cycle, which just ended, have made plans to travel to Germany this summer to take part in Israeli-Palestinian dialogue workshops.

This third cycle of the JIYAF program has been funded by grants from the **World Conference of Religions for Peace**, the **Pontifical Mission** and the **Embassies of the U.S.A. and the Netherlands**.

Special course about the relations between Jews and Poles

ICCI's special course about "**Encountering Poland: Relations between Jews and Poles – Religious, Historical and Social Dimensions**", a collaboration between ICCI and the **Polish Institute**, with added support from **Ms. Luna Kaufman** of New York, began in October 2009. The course program featured guest lecturers from Poland and Israeli experts, who spoke to the participants bi-weekly. The concluding session of the course took place on June 14, 2010, at ICCI's Educational Center. The first part of this session was attended by special guests **Rabbi Prof. Yehoyada Amir**, of the **Hebrew Union College** in Jerusalem, and **Rabbi Shlomo Brin**, of **Yeshivat Har Etzion**, who spoke to the group about their journey to Poland on in October 2009 as part of an ICCI delegation. The second part of the session was dedicated to reflective discussion about the course and insights gained by the participants, who expressed their satisfaction with the course and hopes for the continuation of this or similar courses. Course participants are given the opportunity to go on study tour to Poland (Warsaw-Lublin-Kielce-Crakov), which is planned for July 22-29, 2010. The tour's purpose is to show the Jewish educators from Israel a side of Poland that they don't know and to meet local activists in Polish-Jewish Relations today. **Avigail Moshe** coordinates this program for ICCI.

VISITING GROUPS

Ibrahim Leadership and Dialogue Project in the Middle East

Amy and Rabbi Dr. Ron Kronish hosted the **Ibrahim Leadership and Dialogue Project in the Middle East** for Shabbat dinner at their home on Friday night, June 11th, along with graduates of ICCI's dialogue and action programs for youth and young adults in Jerusalem. Prior to the dinner, the students were welcomed by **Rabbi Levi Weiman-Kelman** at **Congregation Kol Haneshama** in Jerusalem, where they also received a double briefing by Rabbi Ron Kronish, on Interreligious Relations in Israel and on Reform Judaism in Israel. In addition, ICCI arranged for the group to see the major holy sites in

Jerusalem and to see the main sites in Bethlehem, as well as to meet with young adults there, in partnership with the **Arab Education Institute**.

St. Mary's University student seminar

Between June 5-16, 2010, a group of students from **St. Mary's University** in San Antonio, Texas, visited Israel and the region and took part in a special ICCI seminar. The program for the seminar, organized by **Ophir Yarden**, the Director of ICCI's **Center for Interreligious Encounter with Israel**, focused on experiencing the multiple conflicts and narratives in the Holy Land, and enabled them to get to know Israelis and Palestinians in person through trips to Jaffa, the "triangle" region, Jerusalem, Bethlehem, the Aida Refugee Camp, etc. The participants reported that found the seminar eye-opening, and were especially pleased with the program's focus on political challenges in Israel and Palestine, which made it very unique. See also the related post on our blog:

<http://icciblog.wordpress.com/2010/07/13/%e2%80%9ctake-my-side-but-dont-be-one-sided%e2%80%9d/>

Coexistence in the Middle East course group

On July 4, 2010, the participants of the "**Coexistence in the Middle East**" summer course visited **Yad Vashem** (the Israeli national Holocaust memorial museum and monument in Jerusalem), followed by two lectures illustrating two narratives of the history of Israeli-Palestinian Conflict. **Gershon Baskin** and **Hanna Siniora**, who serve as co-directors of **IPCRI, the Israel/Palestine Center for Research and Information**, taught students from all over the world what it actually means to look at the past from different perspectives. Both veteran peace activists and practitioners told their side of the story and concluded with the statement that there can not be agreement on the past because, despite being contradictory, all sides of the story are correct; nevertheless, there can and should be agreement on the future for peace. For more on this, please visit ICCI's blog:

<http://icciblog.wordpress.com/2010/07/13/coexistence-in-the-middle-east-what-is-history/>



This academic tour program is a collaboration between ICCI, the **International Institute of Leadership** and the **Rothberg International School** of the **Hebrew University of Jerusalem**, and it aims at promoting coexistence through the training of future leaders using academic and experiential seminars that allow direct contact with different cultures. The special academic program, which is coordinated and partially taught by ICCI director Dr. Ron Kronish, is also sponsored by the **Israel National Commission for UNESCO**.

Shalom Hartman Institute program about Islam in Israel



On July 5th and July 12th, ICCI provided the **Shalom Hartman Institute** of Jerusalem with study tours about the largely unknown and generally misunderstood topic of "Islam in Israel". On the first of these tours, which took place on July 5th, a group of American Jewish laypersons travelled to **Abu Ghosh**. The group visited the mosque there, as well as the **Benedictine Monastery**, where they met with Brother Olivier, one of the veteran monks. The group also

visited and the city council headquarters, where they met with **Mr. Issa Jaber**, Director of Education for the town, and the community center of Abu Ghosh, where they met with Palestinian women who have undergone highly successful empowerment workshops for the last two years. At the end of the day, the

group was privileged to meet with **Mohamad Zibdeh**, the **Kadi of Yaffo** and former Kadi of Jerusalem, to learn first-hand about the inner workings of the Muslim courts in Israel.

On July 12th, a group of North American rabbis who are studying at the Shalom Hartman Institute this summer participated in another study tour. This second tour was led by **Rabbi Dr. Ron Kronish**, director of the ICCI, and focused on the area of central Israel known as “the triangle”, which is populated mostly by Muslims. The participants saw the only Palestinian teacher-training college in an Israeli Arab city in Israel—the **Al Qasemi College** in **Baka El Gharbiyah**—where they learned about the way Islam is taught to teachers in training. Later in the day, the rabbis visited **Kafar Kassem** to learn about the massacre of 1956 and its implications for the consciousness of Palestinian citizens who live in that town today. For more on this, please see our blog:



<http://icciblog.wordpress.com/2010/07/13/encounter-the-unknown-study-tours-of-%e2%80%9cislam-in-israel%e2%80%9d-by-icci/>

ANNOUNCEMENTS

New ICCI student intern: Thilo Schöne

ICCI welcomes new Communications and Development Intern **Thilo Schöne**. Among other things, he will be responsible for [ICCI's blog](#) and [Facebook page](#). He will also engage in research on German foundations which could become funders of ICCI. Thilo is a senior at **Dresden University**, Germany, majoring in Political Science and History. He specialized in Middle Eastern Studies and Israeli Politics and interned at the **European Parliament** in Brussels. Thilo is politically active in the **Social Democratic Party** of Germany and participated in exchange programs of the **Willy Brandt Center**, meeting Israeli and Palestinian young people. Originally from Dresden, he spent a semester at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem and interned in parallel at the **Friedrich Ebert Stiftung**, East Jerusalem.



ICCI blog updates

The following is a list of recent updates to the ICCI blog (<http://icciblog.wordpress.com>):

- [Encounter the unknown! Study tours of “Islam in Israel” by ICCI](#) - by Thilo Schöne
- [“Take my side, but don’t be one-sided”](#) - by Thilo Schöne
- [Coexistence in the Middle East: What is HIStory?](#) - by Thilo Schöne
- [JIYAF Closes a Year of Dialogue by ‘Opening a Window’](#) – by Jennie Grayson
- [Hiba Aliyan of Face to Face](#) - by Jason Kaufman
- [Zuza Radzik](#) - by Jennie Grayson

We welcome your comments to postings on our blog, now and in the future.