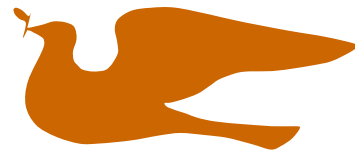


Jerusalem Institute for Israel Studies March Journal



A monthly newsletter of the latest activities, events, publications and press releases of the Jerusalem Institute for Israel Studies (JIIS)

Conferences

Jerusalem and the Churches – Property Rights, Interests and the Benefit to the City

The well-attended conference presented a preliminary study that mapped Church property in Jerusalem. At the conference **Israel Kimhi** revealed his surprising findings concerning the scope of church owned properties in the city (5,000 km²) and their central locations. **Dr. Amnon Ramon** presented the contribution of the churches to the city's landscape and cultural diversity and described the historical motivations and tactics through which the various churches accrued property in Jerusalem.

Roman Gotlieb presented a history of the Russian Church's acquisition and development of properties in Jerusalem. **Dr. Shmuel Berkowitz** presented a legal history of the Russian Compound in Jerusalem (the Sergei Courtyard). **Pazit Schweid** presented the position of the Society for the Protection of Nature regarding the Sergei Courtyard and **Naomi Tzur** presented the Jerusalem municipality's position concerning the Sergei Courtyard. **Grigor Lisoi**, the representative of the Russian Orthodox Church, made a welcome surprise appearance at the conference. Lisoi, who had arrived from Russia, gave an update concerning the Sergei Courtyard (the Russian Orthodox Church will work in cooperation with the Society for the Protection of Nature) and disclosed that the source of funding for the purchase of the land in the center of Jerusalem originated in a loan provided by the Jewish banker, Haim Valero.



Roman Gotlieb (right) and Dr. Shmuel Berkowitz

- **Attitudes among the Jewish Israeli public toward Christianity, Christian civilization and Christian presence in Israel**

The conference centered around the findings of a public opinion survey conducted by the JIIS in cooperation with the Jerusalem Center for Jewish-Christian Relations (Executive Director: Daniel Rossing). Participants included: **Daniel Rossing, Dr. Amnon Ramon, Archbishop Rev. Dr. Abuna Elias Chacour, Rabbi Professor Naftali Rothenberg, and Ms. Yisca Harani.**



Archbishop Rev. Dr. Abuna Elias Chacour and Dr. Amnon Ramon

- The following is a summary of the talk presented by **Archbishop Elias Chacour**, head of the Greek-Orthodox community in Haifa, Acre and the Galilee and President of the Mar Elias College in Ibillin. The summary is reproduced here on account of its importance.

- The survey and study conducted by the Jerusalem Center for Jewish-Christian Relations and the JIIS upset Archbishop Chacour by exposing the widespread ignorance prevailing among the Israeli Jewish public regarding Christian Arabs. The Archbishop noted that "Christianity grew out of Judaism and that most Christians in Israel believe their ancestors were Jews who became Arab". "They see themselves as the followers of Christ – Nazareth's Rabbi."



Archbishop Rev. Dr. Abuna Elias Chacour, Ms. Yisca Harani and Rabbi Professor Naftali Rothenberg

Archbishop Chacour said he was hoping to hear the Jewish Israeli community take a courageous stance and declare that "the State of Israel does not favor Jews over Arabs." His vision is one of "unity within the mosaic of diversity, and respect for differences." He emphasized the need for his community members to overcome the trauma of the demolition of their homes in Biram and to oppose violence. He mentioned the

participation of students and instructors in a blood drive organized at Mar Elias College in Ibillin following a terrorist attack in Tel-Aviv as a symbol of contribution to society and to coexistence.

He recounted his father's injunction to him to find a way to understand the Jewish people. His father had told him that they were "survivors of the infamous Hitler," "blood-brothers" (*Blood Brothers* is the title of Chacour's book about the Christian-Arab community in the Holy Land) and sons to a common father, Abraham. He admitted that "Christian Arabs did not imagine that they would one day become a minority while their Jewish neighbors in Safed and Meiron would become the majority."

He emphasized the fact that the Jews, for the first time, are a majority and "hold the important decisions in their hands." He presented the position of the Greek Orthodox community, which he heads, and said: "we seek full integration into the state of Israel. We have no external protector, not Greece, not France, and not the Vatican. Our only refuge is here."

He is aware of Jewish feelings and accusations toward Christian Europe, but the question must be asked why the Christian Arabs in Israel should pay for what happened in Europe. He is in favor of maintaining good relations with both Jews and Muslims.

The survey's findings do not bear good news in his opinion. "In order to find their place in the Middle East, all sides need to become acquainted with one another," he says. "The Jewish people are forgetting the protection that Islam gave them at times of persecution. The youth should be taught to understand the other (in Hebrew, the three letter word for "other", *acher*, contains the two letter word for brother, *ach*). We, Christians, are making steps to accommodate Judaism. For example I have proposed to use the term the First Testament and the Second Testament in place of the Old Testament and the New Testament. We expect the Jewish people to take reconciliatory steps as well. He invited



the Jewish crowd to visit Christian Arab villages. He stresses that his community members "don't want to be loyal citizens to the country; they want to be initiating citizens. They want to build up the state together with the Jews and the Muslims." The conclusion to be drawn from the survey, in his opinion, is that "action should be taken to eradicate ignorance and misunderstanding among Arabs as well as Jews – particularly the younger generations." "We are looking for a way to convince young Jews (who have no knowledge of the subject) that not every non-Jew is a natural enemy of Judaism and the State of Israel," said Chacour.

Chacour stressed the identity crisis among the youth as one of the pressing problems that his community faces. Young Christians are experiencing difficulties defining their identity and feel unwelcome in Jewish as well as Muslim society. Often, the crisis and frustration affecting the children and the parents leads to emigration outside of Israel. Chacour expressed his concern that the mass emigration of Christian Arabs to countries such as the United States, Canada and Australia, may result in the disappearance of the community.

- **Israel and the Occupied Territories**

First Session – Legal Aspects. Participants included: Prof. Daniel Bar-Tal, Prof. David Kretzmer, and Dr. Robi Seibel.

- Second Session – Political and Social Aspects. Participants included: Prof. Yitzhak Schnell, Prof. Asher Cohen, Prof. Tamar Hermann, Prof. Adi Ophir.
- Third Session – Psychological, Associational, and Geographical Aspects. Participants included: Prof. Yaacov Bar-Siman-Tov, Prof. Yitzhak Schnell and Prof. Daniel Bar-Tal.

Lectures, Meetings and Other Events

- **40 years in Jerusalem** edited by **Ora Ahimeir, Professor Yaacov Bar-Siman-Tov**
Israeli President Shimon Peres, in a handwritten letter to Professor Bar-Siman-Tov, wrote: "It is evident that you have invested a genuine effort in this book, which is commendable and praiseworthy. Please accept my sincere commendation of the Institute's valued activities and its contribution to the academic and public debate concerning Jerusalem, environmental policy, civil society and the economy."

- Since its publication three months ago, 550 copies of the book have been sold. The Ministry of Education's website has posted a warm recommendation for the book by its Israel Studies supervisor, **Dr. Michael Grunzweig**.

New Publication

- **Developing a network of bird-watching sites in Israel**

Editors: **Yossi Leshem, Dan Alon, Yossef Avi, Yair Engel, and Ran Haklai**



Yossi Leshem (center) and Yaacov Bar-Siman-Tov presenting the new publication to then Prime Minister Ehud Olmert.

The book is the culmination of a multiyear project led by the Environmental Policy Center at the JIIS. The study is particularly important for promoting bird-watching in Israel from

an interdisciplinary perspective. The participant organizations in the project were: the Ministry of Environmental Protection, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry for the Development of the Negev and the Galilee, the Ministry of Tourism, the Society for the Protection of Nature, and Tel Aviv University.

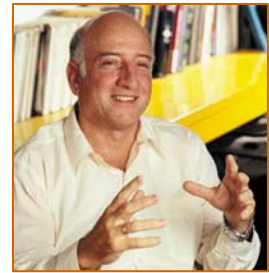
- The publication will be launched on the 23rd of April at the JIIS building and will be accompanied by a commemorative medallion with a value of 2 NIS.

Lectures and Meetings

- **Performance Assessment of Technology Incubators**

A team led by **Dr. Dan Kaufmann** entered a half year ago into a preliminary evaluation of the technology incubators project in Jerusalem and Israel. The project was commissioned by the Research Department at the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Labor. After compiling and creating a database from multiple private and public sources; conducting qualitative interviews with the incubators' managers; and interviewing entrepreneurs who had successfully completed the program, the team submitted its final report to the senior management of the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Labor. The report was followed by a roundtable discussion attended by **Gabi Maman**, director-general of

the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Labor, Chief Scientist of the Ministry, **Dr. Eli Ofer**, Head of the Research Department, **Beni Feferman**, the Ministry's Chief Accountant and the adviser to the minister, **Mr. Elroy Yinon**. The director-general noted the report's importance in characterizing the key topics concerning the incubator program. He stressed the importance of clearly and precisely defining the program's objectives and the importance of structuring the support in a way that best serves the predefined goals. The director-general asserted that the report was "an eye opener" by conveying the importance of evaluation studies and expressed his hope that studies of this kind would be performed for the rest of the Chief Scientist's programs. The Chief Scientist recommended that the program be expanded as soon as possible so that the results of such an extended program could be used to improve the model and better define its goals. The Chief Scientist announced his intention to meet immediately with the new manager of the incubators program and to continue the cooperation with the JIIS for the purpose of expanding the program.



Eli Ofer
(source: Ministry of Trade website)

- **Urban Preservation Policy**

Jerusalem's municipal engineer, **Shlomo Eshkol** and his deputy **Osnat Post** met with **Ora Ahimeir** and **Israel Kimhi** to discuss a JIIS proposal to prepare a policy paper for short, medium and long-term urban preservation policy.

- **City Center** - **Dr. Amnon Ramon** and **Aviel Yelinek** presented a history of Jerusalem's City Center and city renewal cases in other European cities in a conference organized by the "Empower Jerusalem" movement.



- JIIS hosted a group of a hundred Reform rabbis from the United States; **Ora Ahimeir** introduced the Institute's work and **Israel Kimhi** gave a lecture on Jerusalem.

- JIIS hosted the Intelligence Corps Cadets; **Reuven Merhav** and **Israel Kimhi** lectured and guided the group on a tour.



- **Ora Ahimeir** presented the JIIS and potential peace arrangements in Jerusalem to staff members of the British Embassy in Amman and Tel Aviv and the British consulate in Jerusalem.



- **Models of Jewish-Arab Relations**

The first meeting in the series was dedicated to constructing and discussing models of Jewish-Arab relations. Research team head: **Dr. Yitzhak Reiter**. Participants: **Prof. Yaacov Bar-Siman-Tov, Dr. Ephraim Lavie, Dr. Hillel Cohen, Dr. Alexander Yakobson** and **Dan Patir**.

- **Israeli and Palestinian Water Requirements**

The Israeli-Palestinian research-team met to discuss final issues in preparation for the release of the project's final report. Participants included: **Dr. Abed Al-Rahaman Tamimi, Salhut Sand, Maha Abu Lavan, Prof. Eran Feitelson, Dr. Amos Bein, Gadi Rosenthal, Amit Tubi** and **Galit Hazen**.

- **The Coastal Cliff**

A meeting was held in preparation for a government decision concerning the coastal cliff. Participants included: **Galit Cohen, Dr. Amos Bein, and Galit Hazen**.

- **Dr. Maya Choshen** gave a lecture on Jerusalem for staff members at the Central Bureau of Statistics.

- **Board of Directors Meeting**

Jiis's financial reports, activity report and externally-prepared management control report for 2008 were discussed at the meeting. The Board of Directors recommended that the general assembly approve the reports and commended the Institute for its performance and management.

In the Media

- *40 years in Jerusalem*: a 3-page article about the book was published in the Yated Ne'eman newspaper.
- Christians in Jerusalem: a summary of a conference on church property in Jerusalem
- "Haboker Haze" radio show featured an in-depth program about the conference. Three radio stations – "Radio Yerushalyim" in its program "Ma Kore", "Moreshet" and "Galei Tzahal" – aired interviews with **Dr. Amnon Ramon**. *Hamodia*'s newspaper published an in-depth article covering the conference. The *Jerusalem Post* and the Russian-language paper *Novosti Nedali* covered the study's findings in-depth.

- **JIIS weekly column in Kol Ha'ir** – **Michal Korach** wrote about the breakdown of voting pattern in the municipal elections. **Eitan Bluer** wrote about Jerusalem's colleges. **Israel Kimhi** wrote about house demolitions in Jerusalem. **Aviel Yelinek** wrote about the number of visitors to the Jerusalem Archeological Park.
- **JIIS Bi-weekly column in the Jerusalem Post** – **Dr. Maya Choshen** wrote about Aliyah and Olim in Jerusalem. **Michal Korach** wrote about rainfall figures in Jerusalem.
- **Vsitors to the website**
 Number of visitors to the website: 9,296
 Most popular item: "Jerusalem in numbers 2007/8" (960 hits)
 Most popular downloads: "Green Urbanism" (English) and "Jerusalem in numbers 2005/6"
 Number of visitors to the blog: 703 (a 19% increase from the previous month)

Upcoming Events at the JIIS

- April 20: 'An Army with a State' -- the military as a policy player
- April 23: A network of bird-watching sites in Israel – for the promotion of eco-tourism
- May 3: Metropolitan Jerusalem – shifts in the municipal organization of Jerusalem
- May 4: In preparation for the pope's visit – the Catholic Church in Israel and in Jerusalem
- May 17: Civil Society in Jerusalem – central organizations and institutions in the city
- May 26: Jerusalem - present and future (a closed event for the American Technion Society)

