



Keshet Insight Seminar 2016

The Great Balancing Act:

To Be a Democratic, Jewish State with a Large Arab Minority - From Herzl to Today

January 31 – February 6, 2016

When Theodor Herzl envisioned a Jewish State in his book, *Altneuland*, he imagined a country that would be both a Jewish homeland and a liberal society guaranteeing equal rights to Jews and non-Jews alike. In the Declaration of Independence, David Ben Gurion used similar language, despite the fact that he had no illusions about the realities of the historical conflict between Jews and Arabs in what had been Palestine. Today, the annual Keshet Insight Seminar will take the opportunity to reflect on the progress made by Israel in achieving this goal in light of the harsh realities of the Middle East. We will devote a very intensive week to examining the challenges posed to Israel's political system, morality, security and self-identification in light of the fact that over 20% of its population defines itself as being either Israeli Arab or Palestinian Israeli.

Sunday, January 31: HISTORY VS. NARRATIVE

- Visit **Tel Aviv University's Dayan Center** for briefings from experts, including a historical survey of the attitude of Zionists to the "Arab Problem" and of Arab nationalists to the "Jewish Problem," a historical analysis of Arab resistance to the Partition Plan, the creation of the refugee problem, and the evolution of Israeli-Arab self-identity and Palestinian nationalism.
- Explore the microcosm of **Jaffa** to gain insight into the controversial 1948 battle as well as the current reality of life in a mixed Jewish-Arab city.
- Hear the **personal story** of an Arab woman who stayed in Jaffa and established a famous coffee shop, even though most of her family ended up in Lebanon.
- Evening lecture with **Ari Shavit** or **Moshe Arens**: *Was the Tragedy Inevitable?*

Overnight: Tel Aviv

Monday, February 1: FROM NARRATIVE TO CITIZENSHIP

- Visit **Lod**, another mixed Jewish-Arab city and the site of one of the most controversial events of the War of Independence.
- Meet with **Miri Eisen**, former International Advisor to the Prime Minister of Israel, to learn of the battles that made the existence of Israel possible, but also led to the emergence of the refugee challenge and the Naqba narrative.
- Visit an **Arab high school** to meet the student body and principal, **Shirin Chafi-Natur**, an Arab woman who also teaches Hebrew literature to Jewish students in an attempt to bridge a seemingly unbridgeable gap.
- Meet with **Jewish and Arab municipal figures** charged with keeping the peace and moving toward prosperity in one of Israel's most problematic cities.

- Continue to **Nazareth** to learn about the complex identity of **Christian Israelis**, a minority in a more militant Moslem community. Hear how some have chosen to identify as "Arameans", indigenous Christian residents of Israel who do not consider themselves to be part of the Arab nation.
- Dinner with a group of **Christian Arab IDF soldiers and National Service volunteers**.

Overnight: Nazareth

Tuesday, February 2: ISRAELI ARABS – ONE PEOPLE, TWO IDENTITIES

- Meet with **Riah Abu Al-Assal**, an Anglican Bishop of Israel and Palestine and Palestinian nationalist leader who vehemently opposes the integration of Christian Arabs in Israeli society.
- Continue to the "**Arab Triangle**" to meet **social and political activists**, including a professor of sociology who was the first woman in her community to go to college and a representative of the Islamic League.
- Visit an **Islamic Religious Seminary** that trains Muslim clergy.
- Dinner in **Haifa** with **Professor Sami Smoocha**, President of the Israeli Sociology Association and **Professor Arnon Sofer**, Israel's leading demographer.

Overnight: Haifa

Wednesday, February 3: RECOGNIZING THE COMPLEXITY OF THE BEDOUIN COMMUNITY

- Meet with controversial grantee of the NIF, **Adalah**, an organization that works to promote the rights of Arab Israelis and Palestinians and advocates for rewriting the "social contract" between Israel and its Arab population.
- Continue to the northern **Negev** to visit an "established" **Bedouin** city, as well as a sprawling, unregistered and unrepentant "village" at the heart of the dispute with the Israeli government over land allocations in the Negev.
- Meet with individuals who have emerged from the Bedouin community as leading figures in Israel's academic and medical communities.

Overnight: Jerusalem

Thursday, February 4: LOOKING AHEAD: MUST ISRAEL CHOOSE BETWEEN ITS JEWISH & DEMOCRATIC IDENTITY?

- Tackle the critical question of Israel being both Jewish and democratic in a series of discussions with a wide range of political, judicial and intellectual figures, including **Salim Joubran** and **Elyakim Rubinstein** from the Israeli Supreme Court, **Beni Begin** and **Uri Praver**, authors of the Praver Report, the most serious effort ever launched to bring about a reasonable solution to the Bedouin land issues, and **Yedidya Stern** of the Israel Democracy Institute, charged with ensuring Israel's future as a democratic and Jewish state.
- Evening cultural program featuring **Jewish and Arab musicians** from the Rubin Academy.

Overnight: Jerusalem

Friday, February 5: MY ENEMY, MY NEIGHBOR, MY FRIEND

- Learn about **reconciliation and coexistence efforts** between Jews and Arabs in contemporary Israeli society, including organizations such as **The Hand in Hand Center for Jewish-Arab Education in Israel**, **Kids4Peace**, and **Neve Shalom/Wahat-al-Salam**, an intentional community for Jewish and Palestinian Arab citizens of Israel.
- OR Tour the Arab town of **Abu Gosh** with **Khaled Abu Toemeh**, Israeli Arab journalist.

Overnight: *Jerusalem*

Saturday, February 6: SHABBAT

- Summaries. TBD.

Overnight: *TBD.*

- Listed activities and speakers are subject to confirmation.
- Program will be staffed by a Keshet Israel Tour Educator.
- All breakfasts plus underlined meals are included in the package price.
- This itinerary is proprietary to Keshet and is intended for the promotion of and to inform those considering joining this Keshet trip. It is not to be transmitted to any other party without prior authorization from Keshet.



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