

The background of the entire page is a watercolor illustration of green leaves. The leaves are in various shades of green, from light lime to deep forest green, and are scattered across a vibrant blue background. The style is soft and artistic, with visible brushstrokes and color blending.

The Peoplehood Papers 7

February 2012 | Shvat 5772

Reinvigorating Jewish Peoplehood

The Philanthropic Perspective

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Editor: Shlomi Ravid

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Letter from the Editor

We are thrilled to renew the publication of the Peoplehood Papers as a collaboration of the Center for Jewish Peoplehood Education and the Commission on the Jewish People of the UJA Federation of New York.

Our focus this year is on Peoplehood in practice. We dedicated this issue to the role philanthropy plays, and can play, in reinvigorating Jewish Peoplehood. We were more than pleasantly surprised by the incredible response to our request for articles. The authors of the articles in this edition of the Peoplehood Papers represent a sample of the largest and most active funders and organizations in the area of Jewish community, education and welfare in Canada, Europe, Israel and the United States. We bring you their articles posted in alphabetical order except for the collection's introductory article written by my colleague Ezra Kopelowitz and myself.

Our summer issue will grapple with the following question: **Nurturing Peoplehood in a Global and Open Jewish World - What Should We Do Differently?** If you would like to submit an article please write shlomi@jpeoplehood.org

The Peoplehood Papers can be viewed online at www.jpeoplehood.org/publication but if you would like to receive a hard copy please write us at the above address.

Kol tuv and enjoyable reading,

Shlomi Ravid

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Introduction: Peoplehood Philanthropy – Some Reflections on the State of the Field

Shlomi Ravid and Ezra Kopelowitz

For a People who chronically complain it cannot define what peoplehood means, this collection of philanthropic perspectives presents a very different picture: The essays in this volume document a wealth of innovation based on substantial research, thorough planning and creative experimentation in reinvigorating Jewish Peoplehood. One could actually say that for those concerned for the future of Jewish Peoplehood this is one of the more optimistic conversations we have encountered to date.

Peoplehood is clearly a topic of rising concern and gaining momentum among Jewish philanthropists and communal organizations. Over the past several years, we can observe a shift from a focus on welfare and educational services to individual Jews or the support of communities in need to a reframing of these same issues through the collective prism. Jewish philanthropies are paving the way to a new synthesis between individualistic and pluralistic expressions of Judaism and the collective's voice. They are also enabling younger generations to seek meaning and purpose in the Jewish collective enterprise of the future.

Andres Spokoiny of the Jewish Funders Network writes: "Peoplehood is what mathematicians call a 'necessary but not sufficient' condition. Peoplehood is the platform upon which our community of purpose is built; there is intrinsic value in peoplehood, and the creation of links of solidarity and belonging can solve one of the biggest crises of our time. But, as the crises of belonging and meaning are intertwined, peoplehood must serve as a platform for Jews to find meaning beyond simply belonging."

All the contributions to this edition of the Peoplehood Papers embrace the shift to Peoplehood. Their philanthropic strategies differ as do the constituencies they focus on, but not their ultimate goal nor their willingness to collaborate with other philanthropic entities in addressing the Peoplehood challenge. The focus of the authors provides insights into the current state of affairs, both in terms of that which is of concern and that which is not, and who is at the table, and who is not.

A strong focus on school age and young adults

Much of current “Peoplehood philanthropy” focuses on school aged children and young adults – “the Next generation”. Indeed this focus is reflected in most of the papers in this volume. As Jeff Salomon from the Andrea and Charles Bronfman Philanthropies notes: “The greatest opportunity is with the plurality of young Jews that are proudly Jewish but have not had the education or experiences to make it central in their lives”. That approach led the Andrea and Charles Bronfman Philanthropies in collaboration with others to launch Birthright, and pursue with developing leadership, entrepreneurship and innovation through Reboot, 21/64, Grand Street and Slingshot, to name just a few.

Need for creativity

Most of the authors (although not all) argue that we must grapple with the changing nature of young Jews’ Jewish belonging by engaging in creative and dynamic organizational and educational solutions.

Lisa Eisen from the Schusterman Foundation writes: “Indeed, at the heart of our Foundation’s efforts to cultivate Jewish peoplehood is this idea of nurturing the individual Jewish journeys of young adults and ensuring they are inextricably bound up in strengthening the journey of the whole”. By launching creative programs such as ROI and by supporting many other programs that promote a pluralistic Peoplehood with young Jewish individuals in its center, it works to “put the people back into Peoplehood”.

Felicia Herman from the Natan Foundation brings into the conversation the story of a young foundation and the route it traveled into Peoplehood philanthropy. “Natan’s grantmaking is in a perennially dynamic state, balancing both the evolving and varied interests of Natan’s many members with the evolving needs of the field and the frequent innovations and innovators that are emerging to address the multiple challenges facing the Jewish people”. The fusion between the way the Foundation operates and the development of its Peoplehood philanthropy embodies the transformation of the philanthropic paradigm.

Joining the Jewish People in order to better humanity

A complementary trend to the focus on young people, is a the strong desire expressed by several of the authors to build Peoplehood by stressing the Jewish contribution to the world. For example, Shoshana Gelfand Boyd from JHUB of the London based Pears Foundation describes an approach which aims at the “young generation” but includes a new vision for Jewish peoplehood: “We at JHub have

witnessed how the global Jewish social action movement is growing and we want to help build the organizations, people and projects which can support it and allow it to become the next generation's 'Soviet Jewry Movement'."

A focus on Jewish communal infrastructure and literacy

A counter current stresses the need to look inwards, with the need to buttress Jewish communal institutions and deepen Jewish literacy.

Yossi Prager from the Avi Chai Foundation links the focus of their strategic intervention to the belief that "day school and summer camps provide the foundation for the energizing nucleus of the next generation of North American Jews". As to the content, according to Avi Chai "the key measure of Jewish peoplehood success is whether participants develop an unconditional attachment and sense of responsibility to other Jews and the State of Israel".

Sally Berkovic from Rothschild brings a unique European perspective into the conversation. The foundation focuses on advancing Jewish literacy and Jewish Academic study – "for without understanding basic concepts of the Jewish lifecycle, the Jewish calendar, Jewish history and Jewish texts, it's hard to make a rational case for feeling connected in a meaningful way to the Jewish people". She calls on world Jewry to learn from and build on the Jewish European story.

Rabbi David Gedzelman from the Steinhardt Foundation – one of the co-founders of the Birthright Israel program, proposes the teaching of Hebrew as a potential future lynchpin for Jewish Peoplehood: "Creating platforms by which Jews and others around the world can learn Hebrew should be one strategy in an overall educational program by which Jewish Peoplehood might be built on a foundation of knowledge, understanding and connection".

Shana Penn from the Taube Foundation and Danielle Foreman from the Koret Foundation share the story of the Koret Taube Peoplehood Initiative. It is unique in offering a strategic approach to bringing Peoplehood to a community – the San Francisco Bay Area Jewish community, through its Jewish Community Centers and various other institutions. An additional component of the Initiative is the philanthropic intervention in the "contemporary resurgence of Jewish culture" in Poland as "a key component of the future of Jewish life globally".

The role of central communal organizations

Central to the Peoplehood shift is a complementary conversation about the role of large, central communal organizations. Many of the authors embrace the need for supporting start-up organizations or autonomous, business-oriented operations such as Birthright as a response to the challenges of contemporary Jewry. Large central communal organizations are developing various responses to this change in the philanthropic paradigm.

David Mallach and Sanford Antignas, writing on behalf of the Commission on the Jewish People of the UJA Federation of New York, document their shift to Peoplehood and the strategic approach behind it: “UJA-Federation of New York has been focusing on Jewish Peoplehood in the 21st century context for more than a decade, funding programs and research and development. It has sought to act as a catalyst, convener and connector. These programs have ranged from funding tri-lateral programmatic relationships between organizations in New York, Israel and a third country; to convening and funding the Global Task Force on Jewish Peoplehood Education to begin development of ‘how to make Peoplehood happen in practice’ in various educational settings.”

Misha Galperin from JAFI grapples with the challenge of making Jews understand that if they stand to benefit from a global system they need to fund it. In view of current trends in the world of philanthropy and the way Jews view their collective institutions, he calls for the creation of a tzedaka/peoplehood curriculum to address the challenge: “We need a values curriculum that creates a shared lexicon of responsibility”.

Steve Schwager of JDC asks if the current philanthropic paradigm spells out the end of the large organizations. He believes that if they make the right adjustments they can succeed and thrive in this new environment, bringing benefits and resources that smaller organizations cannot. He concludes that: “one needs to be careful not to rush to the conclusion that large agencies are doomed to be extinct in this new ‘Jewish Peoplehood’ environment”.

Rebecca Caspi of JFNA echoes similar sentiments. “Jewish Peoplehood in action” she claims is “rallying Jews and Jewish communities within North America and around the world to be connected, responsible, identified and inspired”. “In the 21st century”, she adds, “this requires sensitivity to the changes in our culture, the need to be relevant for this generation, to be inclusive and to provide a big tent so that the imperative notion of Jewish family, of Peoplehood, will indeed hold firm”.

Let us continue this conversation – it is vital!

We hope that the conversation in these pages of the Peoplehood Papers will add to and encourage the wave of Philanthropic interest in Peoplehood. There is vital need for organized discussion to help create connections between philanthropists and community organizations and round out and deepen the understanding that any one of us has of the Peoplehood phenomenon.

Here are some of the questions that arise from a reading of these Peoplehood Papers, which we think are vital for continuing this Peoplehood conversation:

1. Where are the adults?

Almost all of the authors focus on school aged children and young adults. What of the adults who send their children, serve as board members and volunteers? Surely the people who “make it happen” are vital for the continued expansion of Peoplehood consciousness!

2. What is the communal capacity for Peoplehood?

How does philanthropic intervention lead to increased communal capacity for Peoplehood? The authors in this volume who focus on organizations and their work are touching on a core issue that deserves greater attention – what must change in the way our philanthropists and communal organizations operate in order to sustain and expand the shift to Peoplehood?

3. Engaging the Israelis in the Peoplehood Conversation

With the notable exception of the NADAV Foundation, few philanthropists have systematically focused on the Peoplehood potential in Israeli society. Reengaging the Jewish State in the conversation about the Jewish collective is crucial to the future of this conversation.

4. Developing the field of Peoplehood education

Finally, most of the philanthropic interventions described in this collection focus on specific target audiences and programs. There are clearly issues and areas where coordination and collaboration will create a whole that is much bigger than its individual parts – the development of a common language, of training infrastructure and educational programming, and of the research essential to the development of the field of Peoplehood identity building. For this reason, it is our hope that the conversations found in the coming pages, will continue to develop and grow.

Dr. Shlomi Ravid and Dr. Ezra Kopelowitz are Fellows at the Center for Jewish Peoplehood Education



Towards a Community of Purpose¹

Andres Spokoiny

In our post-modern times, the traditional concepts of belonging, identity and community are collapsing under the weight of social-media, ideological skepticism and the paradigm of ‘user-defined’ content. Multi-hyphenated identities are the norm in a world of coexisting pluralities. At the same time, the rise of fundamentalisms and the polarization of the Jewish world are a symptom of a deep ‘cultural malaise’ that leaves most Jews perplexed, in the search for meaning and a redefined sense of community. The last financial crash and the ravages of hyper-consumerism destroyed the belief that, at a last resort, we could find in shopping malls the meaning that we can’t find in religion or politics. We live in a world that confronts two simultaneous crises: the crisis of belonging and the crisis of meaning. If we approach the concept of peoplehood in its true, multidimensional nature, it can offer a solution for this feeling of ontological crisis and perplexity.

Peoplehood—towards a community of purpose

The art of being a people.

A French philosopher once said that “Jews taught the world the art of being a people”. Indeed, the internal solidarity of the Jewish People as expressed in the concept of “Kol Israel arevim ze laze” (all Jews are responsible for one another), is one of the secrets of Jewish survival. It is, in great measure, the glue that guarantees our internal cohesion despite our differences. The idea of “for one another” takes us from “me” to “we,” and what message is more relevant today, as we live in conditions of individualism and disconnection? The concept of “for one another” means that none of us will ever be alone. The idea of being there “for one another” does not disconnect Jews from the rest of the world. Rather the opposite, by developing the concept of mutual responsibility, we extend this core idea to the rest of the world. Jews believe that all human beings are tied together in an inescapable network of mutuality wherein what happens to one happens to all.

¹ This submission is part of a larger article

This is the basic idea behind the concept of peoplehood: The concept of a kinship not of genes but of history and destiny. The idea of peoplehood is not just the basic glue that holds the Jewish People together; it's one of the most significant Jewish contributions to the world.

Peoplehood today, however, is different than our modern-19th century understanding of the term. Peoplehood today is a collection of interactions and connections. It's a sum of individual associations between independent nodes. It's not the uniformity of the "party line" or the homogeneity of a religious belief. Far from the tidiness of a well-constructed family tree, peoplehood today is a messy juxtaposition of links and groupings that change shape all the time. As the concept of peoplehood was one of our great contributions to humanity, the re-invention of peoplehood in a way that it remains relevant in a networked world is an eminently Jewish task.

Yet, peoplehood is what mathematicians call a "necessary but not sufficient" condition. Peoplehood is the platform upon which our community of purpose is built; there is intrinsic value in peoplehood, and the creation of links of solidarity and belonging can solve one of the biggest crises of our time. But, as the crises of belonging and meaning are intertwined, peoplehood must serve as a platform for Jews to find meaning beyond simply belonging.

The "peoplehood of meaning" needs to be articulated along two avenues that run counter to the logic of restrictive kinship and victimhood. The Jewish people need to define a mission in the world that is both connected to it, and oriented to the future. We need to change our narrative: from one of persecution, to one that highlights our interconnectedness and the enormous contributions that we can make to the world and to the future of humanity. This is, in a way, a "return to the sources." This is what Judaism has always aspired to be. When G-d blesses Abraham, he says, "and through you will be blessed all the peoples of Earth."

So the first requirement in our quest to redefine the meaning of Judaism is to look outward. We need to define our mission in terms of what difference we want to make in the world. Nothing else will provide a better source of meaning and identity for the next generation.

Our reason to exist can't be purely internally defined. Rabbi Nachman Krochmal said that the very essence of who we are as a people is a dialogue between the particular and the universal. Or, as Paul Johnson said, "Jews turn their particular fate into a universal moral." For Krochmal, the dialogue between the universal and the particular is not an addition to our national character; it's an intrinsic part of who we are. We are meant

to take a part in the drama of human history. If we turn inward, and close ourselves to the world, the anti-Semites win, having succeeded in neutralizing our presence and our voice. Jews are called to transform the universal through their particularity.

The second principle in our redefinition is that it has to be focused on the future. As a people, we seem obsessed with the past. Indeed, the word *zachor* (remember) appears 172 times in the Bible. We are commanded to remember and give memory a central place in our consciousness. Nonetheless, for most of our history, Judaism has been a future-oriented culture.

Dan Falk, the author of a great book about our understanding of time, actually credits the Jews with the very invention of the idea of “future.” In ancient pagan culture, time was cyclical. The seasons of nature came and went and time, as such, was eternal, an endless repetition: What was is what will be. For Judaism, time follows a progressive sequence of distinct and unique events. In a phrase: the future needs to be different from the past. We are commanded to transform our world. We are commanded to bring about a messianic time, a different future.

That orientation to the future is critical to the continuity of Judaism. Nobody will stay Jewish only because of the past; the next generation will be Jewish because of the future. We remain Jewish because of what we have yet to achieve. If we believe that our task is only to preserve our heritage, we’d be better off opening museums. Our past makes no sense if it’s not oriented towards the future.

These two tenets help us build a peoplehood of meaning, and a community of purpose. If we believe that our purpose is universal, and that we need to orient ourselves towards the future, the question becomes simple: what can Jews contribute to the future of humanity?

That conversation itself, regardless of its result, outcome, or conclusions—or, more likely, lack thereof—will strengthen the internal links of the Jewish people, reinforce the idea of peoplehood and establish the Jewish experience as the framework in which the search for meaning plays out.

The role of Independent Philanthropy in peoplehood and meaning

There seems to be an inherent paradox in the title above. Peoplehood seems to be all about the collective, while independent philanthropy is about individual action. But independent philanthropy has been enormously successful in building peoplehood where collective organizations were failing. Take Birthright, an independent philanthropic initiative that has contributed

more than anything to the creation of links between Israel and Diaspora youth, thereby creating the basic fabric of peoplehood. Think of Beit Hatfutsot and the work of the Nadav foundation, dedicated to the idea of peoplehood. Consider the Steinhardt foundation and its work in education towards peoplehood. The most successful programs building peoplehood today are funded and initiated by independent philanthropists.

That may be because network of philanthropists—and networks in general—embody the way in which the individual and the collective interact in our post-modern world. Mainstream, top-down organizations fail to grasp the complex nature of today's collectives. In a world of ad-hoc fluid identities, peoplehood can only be built by those who understand the nature of networks and who, themselves, operate in networks. A network of independent philanthropists is better placed to create networks of individuals Jews. It mirrors and embodies the reality it is trying to create.

Moreover, when philanthropists define programs in which the participants themselves are the builders of the programs, their effectiveness increases substantially. In a world of “user generated content,” loose networks of philanthropists can have the flexibility to allow for multidimensional user input. The Schusterman and Jim Joseph Foundations, for example, are spearheading networking as a way of organizing an innovative Jewish community. “Network” is the new face of peoplehood.

And as philanthropists have played a pivotal role in the recreation of peoplehood among young Jews, they are uniquely placed to contribute to the next stage: the peoplehood of meaning and the creation of communities of purpose.

Less constrained than collective organizations, foundations can fund and support venues in which ideological debate is conducted freely and openly. They can encourage innovation and support those who propose new ways of finding meaning in our troubled world. The principle of “venture philanthropy” can help Jews “test out” new ways of finding and creating meaning. The community of independent funders needs to understand that in this quest for meaning, there is no “single bullet”. As a community of funders we need to help individual Jews create venues in which they can “hug and wrestle” with their own Judaism, alone and collectively. We need to empower individuals to put meaning on the links and nodes of their networked peoplehood.

Many are already doing it: from those that fund Jewish identity projects in Israel, to those that support independent minyanim and alternative Jewish culture in the Diaspora.

Helping Jews find their own answer to the question of “why be Jewish” may be a next frontier for Jewish Philanthropy. The foundations of Peoplehood need to be continually reinforced, so that an edifice of meaning can be built on them.

Andres Spokoiny is the President and CEO of the Jewish Funders Network



Hebrew and Peoplehood

David Gedzelman

For a disaffected American Jewish young adult, who may have recently warmed to the idea of Jewish connection through a Birthright Israel trip or some spiritual experience, our musings as to how philanthropy might build and strengthen Jewish Peoplehood risk ringing hollow. We use Mordecai Kaplan's original term, Peoplehood, in the affective sense that all Jews are connected and responsible for one another, without defining what the Jewish People is or why one should want to belong. We argue for connection and commitment without first helping Jews, wherever they may be, articulate and understand to what kind of human grouping being Jewish implies belonging.

American Jews have been taught for a century that being Jewish is a matter of religious identity similar to the ways non-Jewish Americans define themselves as Episcopalians, Roman Catholics or Methodists. The problem is that Christian categories are exclusively a matter of theological commitment, of faith, while being Jewish certainly includes the religious but entails so much more. Being Jewish means being part of the extended family that is the Jewish People.

This family from its very beginnings has accepted those into it who choose its terms of citizenship (Exodus 12: 37-50). One can be born into this family or one can choose to join this family. It has a rich tradition of covenantal openness (Babylonian Talmud, Shabbat: 31a). It is a civilization that articulates its reason for being in terms of a mission for bringing blessing to all the families of the earth. (Genesis 12:3) It hopes to be a light of nations and does not expect others to disappear when learning from that light but aspires to a vision by which all peoples can realize themselves as particulars in the context of a universal humankind (Isaiah 42:6).

This family has a language and a literature, although mostly unknown to the vast majority of American Jews. It has a land but has evolved a sophisticated sense of belonging by which one can stand in relation to Jewish life in that land but live elsewhere. It came together in the last century to create a sovereign Jewish state in that land with the promise of awakening and rebirth for Jews wherever they might be. Moreover, that democratic and Jewish state of Israel can contribute profoundly to the revitalization of

Jewish life everywhere but should do so by affirming, not negating. In other words, this family and civilization has developed the notion of being what Mordecai Kaplan called, “an international People.”

Yet, the vast majority of American Jews find themselves unable to articulate the idea of the Jewish people, or to articulate any understanding of the relationship between Judaism and Peoplehood or that between Jewish religion and Jewish belonging. They have little knowledge of their family’s history; they do not speak its language nor read its books. If building the house of Jewish Peoplehood is only about programs that get Jews to be with each other but is not about educating Jews in understanding the why and the what, such a house can only be half-built. For that reason, Jewish, Hebrew and Israel education need to be at the center of any American Jewish philanthropic agenda that hopes to build Jewish Peoplehood.

For example, of crucial importance to this is the imperative to promote a philanthropic agenda for the teaching and learning of Modern Israeli Hebrew among Jews in the Diaspora especially American Jews. Hebrew represents a multi-pronged approach. Knowledge of Hebrew in a general sense is a key to Jewish civilization. The understanding, speaking, reading and writing of Modern Israeli Hebrew (in that order of acquisition) as a natural language can lead to understanding of classical Hebrew and the historic national library of the Jewish People. However, the Jewish educational establishment has taken the opposite approach deeming prayerbook Hebrew and phonetic decoding the basis for all else. That flies in the face of the most informed thinking on second language acquisition but is understandable in the context of a history during which Hebrew lost its status as a spoken and natural language. As the center-piece of the Zionist revolution, however, Hebrew has regained that status but we in the Diaspora haven’t yet fully understood the implications.

Proficiency in Modern Hebrew gives Jews around the world a deeper capacity to relate to life in the state of Israel and to forge relationships with Israelis and with each other. It simultaneously brings content and Jewish understanding to those who master it and serves as a vehicle for Jewish connection and relationship. Currently, however, Hebrew divides more than it unites. A tiny percentage of Diaspora Jews are proficient in Hebrew. Of course, for Americans, learning languages seems to be a challenge in general and any attempt to move more Americans to learn Hebrew needs to take that into consideration. That is why bringing Hebrew into contexts that are already recognized as educationally compelling, like dual-language programs in public schools, is an important strategy for furthering Hebrew. Hebrew will be more appealing to Jews if it is legitimate in the public context that they find culturally authoritative in general.

The good news is that a sizeable percentage of the approximately 300,000 Jewish adults age 18 to 38 who have participated in Birthright Israel are genuinely interested in learning Modern Hebrew. To date, this interest has not been effectively capitalized on, but represents a huge opportunity. Taking advantage of that opportunity will depend on a philanthropic will to bring effective methodologies for second language acquisition to this population in ways that are doable, fun and fit the lifestyles of young people.

Speaking and understanding Hebrew provides not only knowledge of Jewish civilization and the tools for further learning but an intimate connection with the family melody of the Jewish People that is the Hebrew language. Creating platforms by which Jews and others around the world can learn Hebrew should be one strategy in an overall educational program by which Jewish Peoplehood might be built on a foundation of knowledge, understanding and connection.

Rabbi David Gedzelman is the Executive Vice President of The Steinhardt Foundation for Jewish Life



Jewish Peoplehood – A Philanthropic Focus

David Mallach and Sanford Antignas

“One cannot be Jewish without being a part of the Jewish People”

For the first time in more than 2,000 years, Jews live in a world where they may choose their primary collective identity, sense of group identity. Increasingly, Jews are not choosing the global Jewish People as their primary, or even co-equal, collective identity. For some, this is true even though they may identify as Jewish Israelis or pursue an individual spiritual Jewish journey wherever they live.

Only in the last few years has there been recognition of this challenge and the opportunities it may bring. It has not, however, become a philanthropic focus and we are risking the future of the Jewish People if we do not pay sufficient attention to this issue. Jewish Peoplehood must become a priority for funders of all kinds. This is especially the case for Federations, because ultimately the only valid argument that can be made for individual Jewish support of a range of institutions and communal frameworks is that of a collective identity, a sense of being a part of a global Jewish people.

The Case for a Jewish Peoplehood Planning and Funding Focus

There was a time when individual and collective Jewish identity was co-mingled, so that neither could be distinguished from the other. Over our history, “Jewish solidarity,” often imposed by negative, external forces, drove collective Jewish association for the vast majority of Jews. In the 21st century, that is no longer the case.

The combination of the universalistic vision that all people need to be our concern, and an aversion among increasing numbers of Jews, particularly younger generations, to Jewish particularism, have eroded the strong sense of collective Jewish identity. In addition, Jews today have other strong “collective identities”, such as their “national” identity (e.g., Israeli, American, etc.), which dominate their daily lives. One must add to that, at least in the US, the impact of the individualistic American ethos and the

Protestant understanding of religion that have made Judaism, for many, a personal identity search and not a community experience.

Any philanthropist who is concerned about the Jewish future must recognize that without a positive *raison d'être* for global Jewish collective identity, there is little argument to support efforts to define and direct the collective future of the Jewish People.

A strong argument can be made that Judaism constitutes an extraordinary positive and diverse opportunity for a meaningful and rewarding life. It is not only that the Jewish People have existed, but that they continue to evolve and develop, add new dimensions to their collective and individual experiences. And importantly, the Jewish People continue to make the world better as a result of their presence. This is the result of the presence of Jews as a people, not only as individual Jews. The Jewish People have contributed a wide range of ideas and experiences to humanity, including a long series of religious values which have become universal values, and gave birth to both Christianity (directly) and Islam (indirectly). Similarly, the educational and cultural values that have been and continue to be developed and transmitted by Jewish life enrich the world in the arts, sciences, civil society and social experiences. This is to an extent that is far beyond the numerical significance of the Jewish People. For individual Jews, being part of the Jewish People and benefiting from this collective has and can further their quest for self actualization, a life of meaning and contribution to the world around them.

The challenge that faces any funder concerned about the Jewish destiny, whether a collective such as a federation or an individual philanthropist, is how to build on the sense of Peoplehood that remains, and reintroduce it as a central, relevant concept into contemporary Jewish life. Importantly, in meeting this challenge we must recognize the reality that in the contemporary world, with the exception of the Haredi community, Jews have multiple collective identities that are not mutually exclusive from their Jewish identity, but rather do co-exist and are mutually enhancing. In our efforts we must weave together, and help Jews navigate, the perceived tension (which can be a positive) between the universal and the particular.

It is not a simple situation where inaction will sustain the status quo. The forces that sustained the collective identity of the past are no longer as powerful or even present in some cases. Left uninfluenced, the trends towards a growing focus on universalism by most of the community and growing insular, separatist particularism by parts of the community, will continue to define much of the Jewish future. The view long held in Jewish life was that if we focus on Jewish caring (social service agencies, geriatric centers, child care agencies,) and on building individual Jewish identity, we would ensure communal identity. However, this view does not by itself provide the rationale for a distinctly Jewish approach to social service. Nor does it ensure that educational

frameworks include as core, not as an icing on the cake, the inculcation of a sense of a shared past leading to a shared future, rather than a focus on distinct personal Jewish expression. The problem with this view is that these two directions have reinforced the trends of universalism and isolationist particularism. This is because an active, widely accepted presence of a Jewish collectivist framing vision is absent today.

Consequently, Jewish Peoplehood must be an area of focus distinct from, but synergistic with, Jewish individual identity. Ultimately, neither will be able to survive without the other. Jewish Peoplehood must also not merely be a “repackaging” of the approaches and agendas of the past half century, but rather reflective of the challenges and opportunities of Jewish Peoplehood today. The Jewish world has changed dramatically since the end of World War II, the founding of the State of Israel, the Six Day War and the end of the Soviet Union. The external forces that played such a key role in sustaining Jewish communal identity are no longer present. It truly now is up to us as to whether we choose to be associated with the Jewish collective.

The Role of Jewish Federations The Jewish federation system in North America, somewhat ironically was able to thrive because of the sense of collective identity — for if not for a sense of Peoplehood why would an individual Jew in New York care about a Jew in Morocco or Israel. For almost all of the 20th century, the efforts to rescue and resettle Jews, whether in Israel or the US, were a strong reflection of the collective. Yet, since the closing years of the last century, federations have focused virtually all their resources on individual Jewish identity and caring services. The building of a sense of the Jewish collective was assumed to take place by ‘osmosis’ from being with other Jews and doing good together, or was posited as an inherent outcome of Jewish education.

While the federations have not fully recognized the importance of working specifically on building a sense of collective identity, they have come to realize that as federations they have a unique set of assets for both building the collective and in modeling the collective that they are seeking to build. A mission to the former Soviet Union is no longer simply to see how we are helping the poor elderly Jews, but is to interact and engage with the emergent Jewish communities that are now there. One partners with Israel today not only to help those in need, but also to build ties to partner communities with whom we can share concerns on how to best build Jewish life.

The federation is well positioned to do this because from its inception it was seen as an expression of the collective. Its core ideology is to receive support from all segments of the Jewish community, involving all groups in the process of generating support for the

annual campaign. The vision of serving the collective community is also expressed in the planning and financial allocations process as it seeks to provide services to a wide range of efforts in the community, and increasingly in recent years, provide support for those opportunities to strengthen and share in the global collective experience.

Federations have the building blocks to be leaders in the field of strengthening the Jewish collective, locally and globally, to ensure the Jewish future. Although North America based, the federations have always viewed their role in a global Jewish frame of reference.

By virtue of their role as a funder, they receive a wide range of proposals, concept papers, research and suggestions. This allows them to have a relatively comprehensive view of the landscape — who the players are, what ideas are being considered and what directions are of growing interest in the field. In addition, as a result of the past history of funding and the experiences gained from that, the funders have a sense of history and perspective on the field. These two broad landscape aspects, one horizontal and one historical give the funder a unique vantage point to guide grantees in a field, particularly a relatively new one such as Peoplehood where there is little literature or published experience. It provides funders with ability to act as “connectors”, bringing people together to share and create ideas to develop better, more innovative programs that leverage our limited collective human and financial resources.

Approaches to Strengthening Jewish Peoplehood

There are various modes that diverse types of funders may deploy to further Jewish Peoplehood, depending on their particular areas of interest, expertise and capacities. This work can be done through the development and implementation of on the ground programs, as well as strategic interventions by furthering relevant research and development of the field. It can also be promoted by a conscious articulation of the vision of a collective Jewish People. As this is an emerging field, funders should collaborate when appropriate and it is essential that they share their approaches, learning and best practices.

UJA-Federation of New York has been focusing on Jewish Peoplehood in the 21st century context for more than a decade, funding programs and research and development. It has sought to act as a catalyst, convener and connector. These programs have ranged from funding tri-lateral programmatic relationships between organizations in New York, Israel and a third country; to convening and funding the Global Task Force on Jewish Peoplehood Education www.jpeoplehood.org/publications to begin development of “how to make Peoplehood happen in practice” in various educational settings; to

conceiving and funding Siach – an environment and social justice conversation www.siachconversation.org bringing together Jewish professionals from Israel, the US and Europe to network, collaborate and explore their collective Jewish identity and their work in the Jewish world and the world at large.

We are at the beginning of this Journey...

Strengthening global Jewish Peoplehood is hardly a simple task. Defining impact and insuring meaningful approaches to measure effectiveness, two vital concerns of any funder in the contemporary world, is difficult. Depending on the kind of initiative, one may look for indicators that suggest how broad is the community engaged. If those taking part are key opinion leaders and trendsetters who can have a ripple effect throughout Jewish life, one might follow what those individuals do and their impact. Similar to measuring the impact and effectiveness of Jewish individual identity initiatives, the real impact of initiatives and understanding the effectiveness of particular approaches will unfold over several years.

Each aspect of strengthening Jewish Peoplehood needs to be answered thoughtfully and carefully. They can only be judged, however, when one looks at them from a Peoplehood perspective. The question is not whether a program or initiative will be a meaningful personal Jewish experience, for we know how to do that. But rather, how will the program or initiative that we are supporting connect this person to the Jewish People and impact that person's actions on the collective.

We are just at the beginning of this process. This is an emerging area of focus and learning. As such, funders need to take some risks, accept some failures and learn from them in order to achieve our objectives. Innovation, flexibility, patience and a long term commitment to this work is essential. The challenges — the need to insure the Jewish future — make the importance of our task very clear.

David Mallach is the Managing Director of the Commission on the Jewish People of the UJA-Federation of New York; Sanford Antignas is the Chair of the Connecting Communities Cluster of the Commission on the Jewish People



Natan's Jewish Peoplehood Grants

Felicia Herman

The Natan Fund (natan.org) is a grantmaking foundation funded by young philanthropists who pool their philanthropic resources and make grants together to emerging Israeli and Jewish nonprofits and social entrepreneurs around the world. Since a small group of young professionals founded Natan in late 2002, the foundation has granted \$7.77 million to 129 organizations and individuals in Israel and around the Jewish world.

Natan is a giving collaborative, and thus its grantmaking reflects the aggregate philanthropic interests of its members (primarily young professionals in New York). Natan's particular focus on funding emerging organizations – almost exclusively with budgets under \$1.5 million – derives from its members' relatively high tolerance for risk and their strong willingness to fund entrepreneurial, innovative initiatives.

Since 2009, Natan members have allocated \$739,000 to 16 organizations specifically through a "Jewish Peoplehood" grant committee. This article will briefly recount how and why Natan settled upon Peoplehood as a funding priority as well as some of the core elements of Natan's Peoplehood agenda.

Creation of the Grant Committee: Israel, Diaspora, and Peoplehood

innovations and innovators that are emerging to address the multiple challenges facing the Jewish people.

Natan's grantmaking is in a perennially dynamic state, balancing both the evolving and varied interests of Natan's many members with the evolving needs of the field and the frequent

Natan's Peoplehood grantmaking has been a prime example of this dynamism. In 2008, Natan's board split one of the foundation's original grant committees, Jewish Identity, into three smaller and more discrete areas, one of which was "Israel-Diaspora Relations," the precursor to the Jewish Peoplehood committee.

The Israel-Diaspora Relations committee supported organizations that strengthened the relationship between Israel and Jews in the Diaspora, either by bringing Diaspora Jews to Israel or by bringing Israel to the Diaspora in a variety of ways. Yet almost immediately, the Israel-Diaspora dyad felt like a limited framework for understanding world Jewry. The immense diversity of the "Diaspora" side of the equation cried out for more attention, as did the notion that Jews might connect to Jews in other countries without necessarily including Israel in the relationship. Moreover, "Diaspora," with its negative connotation as the penultimate physical locus of Jewish existence, no longer seemed like the way that non-Israeli Jews (especially young ones) understood their lives.

Thus, after a year, the committee was renamed "Jewish Peoplehood," and immediately funding shifted away from the dichotomy between Israel and the Diaspora to a much more complex, global notion of peoplehood that could better address the richness and wide variety of the global Jewish experience. In many ways, this shift reflected the evolving understanding by many Jews around the world that Israel is not "the" center of the Jewish people, but one of many centers. While this might, as some scholars have argued, mean "the end of the Diaspora" as a framing device, it by no means necessitates a rejection of Israel nor of the unique role Israel plays in the life of the Jewish people.²

Indeed, Israel has remained a central programmatic element for many of Natan's Peoplehood grantees, and the Peoplehood Request for Proposals includes "rais[ing] awareness of and strengthen[ing] understanding about Israel" as one of the grant program's core elements. Natan's grantees address Israel in a multifaceted, nuanced way that normalizes Israel as an element of Jewish peoplehood, alongside other central elements. So, for example, Paideia, the European Institute for Jewish Studies in Sweden operates a yearlong, intensive Jewish Studies course for European Jews, primarily using Israeli scholars as faculty and in fact bringing more Israeli faculty to its programs than any other European educational institution. Jewish Heart for Africa appears similar to many other organizations providing aid to the developing world, yet it does so by installing Israeli solar and agricultural technologies in rural African villages, which improves Israel's image in those communities, supports Israeli innovation, and engages hundreds of young Jews in North America and Israel as volunteers and donors for the organization. Moishe House oversees 46 houses in 14 countries, and many of the programs that house

2 See, for example, Noam Pianko's blog posts and article summaries at noampianko.com, and David Shneer and Caryn Aviv, *New Jews: The End of the Jewish Diaspora* (NYU: 2005). These arguments have proven very controversial. For example, Shneer was roundly criticized in the question and answer period following his plenary at the Jewish Funder's Network conference in 2008 (in Jerusalem) and Pianko experienced the same response at the 2010 conference. Audio and video of these sessions can be found at jfunders.org.

residents create for their peers are about Israel, with programs taking on different flavors in different locations. In some countries, for example, the Israel programs are purely cultural; while in others, where participants are more likely to see Israel as a place of refuge, the programs focus on elements of Israeli life that are more relevant to people who are contemplating making aliyah.³

Crossing Borders – Global Connections – Instilling a sense of belonging to the Jewish collective can often be as simple as providing mechanisms for Jews to connect to other Jews “horizontally” – across geographic borders – or “vertically” – across the borders of time. This cross-border element to Peoplehood is another core element of Natan’s Peoplehood grantmaking, and has become more pronounced over time as technological innovations make such connections easier than ever.

Three of Natan’s newest Peoplehood grantees exemplify this cross-border work, albeit in very different ways. Jewgether, an online “hospitality network,” puts a Jewish frame on the internet phenomenon of “couch-surfing” by connecting Jewish travelers to Jewish hosts who are willing to welcome them into their homes, or at least to show them around their home cities; more than 1500 people are currently registered with the site, from all over the world. A Wider Bridge explicitly creates personal connections across borders, in this case by bringing together lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender Jews in North America and with their peers in Israel (with plans to partner with similar groups in other countries in the near future). Asian Jewish Life, a web and print media platform, is bringing Asian Jews to the attention of global Jewry, diversifying readers’ understanding of where Jews live and what they look like, connecting Jews in Asia to each other, preserving the history of Jews across Asia, and strengthening relationships between Asians, Asian Jews, and Israel.

Longtime grantee Toldot Yisrael provides an excellent example of the “vertical” vector to cross-border work. The organization records and shares video testimonies of people who were part of the founding of the State of Israel in 1948, connecting viewers across temporal borders to one particularly dramatic moment in the history of the Jewish people.

3 All information on Natan’s grantees is taken from their websites, grant applications, and personal correspondence with the organizations’ executive directors.

For organizations that are already global in nature, new technologies enable them to operate globally-focused organizations with relatively low overhead. Jewgether and past grantee IsraelGives (an online platform for charitable donations to Israeli nonprofit organizations) operate almost entirely online. Organizations like Moishe House and Presentense (which now operates fellowship programs for social entrepreneurs in 12 cities across 3 countries) utilize complex internal technological systems to enable participants in different communities around the world to see each other's programs, share ideas, offer advice, and report on their activities.

To What End? Importantly, building a sense of Jewish Peoplehood is not an end in itself for most of Natan's grantees, nor for Natan itself.⁴ Most of Natan's Peoplehood grants are for projects that practice "peoplehood in action," but that aren't necessarily "about" peoplehood – instead, they are "about" social entrepreneurship, community-building, *tikkun olam*, Jewish identity, history and culture, and so forth. The goal is to create accessible entrance points for participants into a broader sense of belonging that can then be fleshed out over time as participants engage with Jewish life through a variety of different means – and, in particular, that can address the necessary follow-up question to any peoplehood initiative, which is: to what end - what is the purpose of the Jewish people?

The classical answer to this question has been *tikkun olam*, the Jewish responsibility to repair the world. A few grantees, such as Jewish Heart for Africa, have explicitly articulated a *tikkun olam* agenda. For most, however, the agenda is more implicit. Presentense offers a case in point. The word "peoplehood" rarely appears in its materials, but as co-founder and co-director Aharon Horwitz puts it:

All great Jewish movements have been about the Jewish People trying to realize its collective potential and realize a vision of a more perfect world. Anything worth our investment of time must be proven as a vehicle towards a greater mission. Peoplehood is valuable as a concept to Presentense insofar as it helps organize the Jewish People to strive as a collective to change the world. We try to live that ideal, and in that way, you could call us a Peoplehood organization, even if we don't wear the slogan on our sleeve. But it's in our core. Yes, we connect Jews all over the world and help foster a

4 Daniel Septimus, the CEO of MyJewishLearning.com, has written eloquently on this topic. Daniel Septimus, "The Real Peoplehood Problem," *The Jewish Daily Forward* July 15, 2011, retrieved January 23, 2012 at <http://www.forward.com/articles/139942/#ixzz1kJFJD5F>.

feeling of kinship and shared community – but that’s only important if it’s getting us to take humanity somewhere better.⁵

That goal – connecting Jews, especially young and disengaged Jews, to a diverse, multifaceted, expansive collective that can bring joy and meaning to their lives, so that they ultimately become forces for good in the world – is at the heart of Natan’s Peoplehood grantmaking.

Felicia Herman is the Executive Director of the Natan Fund

5 Aharon Horwitz, private correspondence with the author.



Private Philanthropy as a Builder of Jewish Peoplehood: Observations from the Field

Jeffrey Solomon

It is often said that private philanthropy when done well, is the passing lane of society. Billions of dollars of assets are available for improving the human condition with little external oversight or intervention. Responsibility falls to the philanthropies' board of directors. Indeed, this is a wonderful condition for attempting new ways of confronting existing societal needs. Many such foundations understand that their role should be one of trailblazing. There is a long and noble history of private philanthropy in action which has provided immeasurable benefits to society.

How has this impacted the field of Jewish Peoplehood? The Andrea and Charles Bronfman Philanthropies (ACBP), established in 1986, sought to build a greater sense of national identity in Canada, "Canadianism"; to provide important educational and other critical needs in Israel and "serve the unity of the Jewish people who's soul is in Jerusalem." Inherent and explicit in the formal documents of the Philanthropies is the belief that the primary vehicle to fulfill its mission is through investments in next generations.

The first major manifestation of this in the field of Jewish Peoplehood began in the early 1990's with the development of the Israel Experience Program. The partnership between the CRB Foundation (one of the Philanthropy's arms), the United Jewish Appeal, the Council of Jewish Federations, the Jewish Agency for Israel and others, was its establishment as a vehicle to increase the number of high school students spending summers in Israel. While the Foundation invested \$19 million in this effort and the partners worked toward the reorganization of the vehicles serving this population, sadly, it must be noted that at the end of five years, high school age participation in Israel programs had not increased. An internal evaluation at the time concluded that much of the failure to achieve its objectives had to do with the age of the participants being served, the length of the high school Israel experience (eight weeks), the inability of some of the partners to maintain focus on its objectives, the financial commitment required, limitation of likelihood that the program appealed only to families predisposed to serious

Jewish identity and Israel connection and the administrative structure in which priority was not necessarily well-aligned with the relationship of providers to the program.

The creation and launch of Birthright Israel in December 2000 has often been noted as a “game changer” in both the role of entrepreneurial philanthropists in program creation and management as well as the use of an Israel experience in the development of increased Jewish identity, commitment to Israel, and connection to the Jewish people. It is not accidental that the very elements that were highlighted in the evaluation of the Israel Experience’s failure were engineered to lead to the unprecedented success of Birthright Israel. With more than 300,000 Diaspora participants and 50,000 Israeli participants, the effort was based on five core principles which continue to drive the program today, namely:

1. From this generation on what every Jewish young adult (ages 18 – 26) should have their first learning and living trip to Israel as a gift from the Jewish people.
2. Trip organizing should be conducted on a market-driven basis.
3. The evaluation of trip impact will be a core service included in each budget.
4. Creative pre and post educational programming shall be an ancillary component of Birthright Israel.
5. Birthright Israel should remain as an independent entrepreneurial organization.

Clearly the Birthright Israel experience had any number of elements that led to its success. Not the least of these was the inclusion of impact measurements and the separation of quality assurance from impact evaluation. Quality assurance, conducted by an external source, made sure that the educational and logistical standards of the programs were adhered to by the trip organizers. The franchise model being utilized has many advantages over a centrally run program, not the least of these is the ability to focus on objective standards and making sure that the adherence to these is uniform. At the same time an external impact evaluation program enabled researchers to break down the key elements of increased Jewish identity, connection to Israel and connection to the Jewish people into their key components: cognition, emotion and behavior. Documenting in an intense and demanding way the program outcomes (as opposed to simply program outputs) has become a key element in creating the confidence for donors to generously support the program over the thirteen years since its inception. It should be noted that having a scientifically valid control group (applicants to the program placed on waiting lists) enriched and deepened the impact measures.

Within ACBP, as Birthright was beginning, the question was asked what can we do to better serve those Jews who are so unaffiliated that they would not even apply for a trip

to Israel which was being given to them as a gift? These conversations led to the creation, in partnership with the Righteous Persons Foundation, of Reboot (www.rebooters.net), a carefully developed initiative to have "creative leaders" in North American trendsetting industries (television, films, music, newspapers, magazines, new media) (re)connect to their Jewish heritage and use their creative talents for initiatives that would speak to their marginally or unaffiliated contemporaries in powerful and meaningful ways. In a highly selective process, 45 persons a year were brought to a retreat setting for an intensive weekend in which they explored the Judaism they were inheriting and worked with one another on issues of identity, meaning and community. Open space technology was used which allowed them to select their most important topics. For virtually all, this was the first time that they were not fed Jewish content but rather they were exploring it in their own terms.

This catalyzed many outcomes which space limitations prohibit explicating. Among those were 10Q (www.doyou10q.com), a program that takes the question of tshuvah during the high holidays and uses a digital approach to have participants look inside themselves and answer important questions as to how they are going to change in the coming year, locking those answers in a digital safe and returning them at the end of the year so that they can explore whether one changed in the ways one planned; Sukkah City, a program that has invited architects to design Sukkot, with finalist sukkot publicly displayed, exposing some 150,000 Jewish and non Jewish New Yorkers to the essence of this festival, National Unplug Day and the Sabbath Manifesto (www.sabbathmanifesto.org) which introduces the Shabbat in a very different way to the less observant. As a think tank, catalytic collaborative and an interesting experiment, Reboot has served its purpose well. Hereto, outcome evaluation has been an important component in helping its leaders have it achieve its objectives.

The organic process continued within ACBP as there was need for greater support to innovative projects designed and led by young Jewish peoplehood entrepreneurs. This led the creation of 21/64 which is the philanthropy's arm focused in intergenerational philanthropy. Through convening, consulting and teaching, 21/64 has advanced intergenerational issues in philanthropy, and especially Jewish philanthropy. To meet the need of innovation peoplehood funders, Grand Street was established. It sought to help support a network of young philanthropists, many of whom would be moving into the governance and leadership of their family foundations to take these issues including the issues of innovation in Jewish peoplehood more seriously. In addition to organic expansion, athletic listening is an important component of the personality of ACBP. Grand Streeters asked a simple question: Why is there not a Zagat Guide which ranks Jewish innovation projects so that donors can be more informed in their giving.

As a result of this question, Slingshot was launched. Slingshot annually has twenty five experienced funders rank more than 200 Jewish innovative projects, self-nominated. Fifty are published in a highly designed guide that has become a key component of development for these organizations. Further, following a request from the Grand Street community, ACBP launched a Slingshot Fund where it matched donations from the membership to fund programs within Slingshot, providing practical grantmaking and fundraising experience for those in the Grand Street cohort. This has been replicated in Europe through the creation of Compass: a guide to innovation in Europe and the Tachlis Fund that provides support.

Among the lessons for us in the development of these and other programs is that the circles within circle approach to Jewish identity, arguing for greater investment in the most committed, must be balanced with an outside-in approach, respecting how much those on the margins can do to grow Jewish peoplehood if simply given an opportunity on their terms. One can argue that the institutionally driven “supply” economy of Jewish life must be balanced or replaced by a demand economy; one that credits those working on the margins. It speaks also to the need for contrarians, rejecting the common wisdom. It argues that Jewish life is today offering Shamai while young Jews are seeking Hillel. Finally, it demonstrates that Jewish Peoplehood is a perfect field in which funders and organizations can create a passing lane.

Jeffrey Solomon is the President of the Andrea and Charles Bronfman Philanthropies



Putting the People Back in Peoplehood

Lisa Eisen

Rachel Brody, 26, always knew she was Jewish, but growing up in Houston, Texas, it did not mean much to her. She was much more focused on the parts of her identity that drove her to working with students with special needs.

She never realized the connection between the two until she visited Israel in 2009 as part of the pilot cohort of our Foundation's REALITY Israel Experience, a program that brings Teach For America corps members to Israel to explore the Jewish values that undergird their commitment to public service.

"It left a profound impact on me," said Rachel, who is now working on a movement to create a more welcoming Jewish community for people with disabilities. "Prior to the trip, Judaism was not something I thought about at all. I also never thought about social justice as connected to Judaism. I now realize that my work in social justice is connected to my identity as a Jew."

While Rachel is certainly exceptional, thankfully, she is not an exception. There are many young Jews just like her who are mobilizing around their passions and are eager to root their efforts to make a positive difference in the world in a strong value system.

By creating opportunities for them to explore their passions through a Jewish lens and to develop a personally meaningful connection to Jewish life—be it through history or Hebrew, arts or Israel, spirituality or service—we can help them connect with each other and forge an enduring relationship with our Jewish heritage and homeland. We can also foster in them a sense of belonging to a global Jewish people.

Indeed, at the heart of our Foundation's efforts to cultivate Jewish peoplehood is this idea of nurturing the individual Jewish journeys of young adults and ensuring they are inextricably bound up in strengthening the journey of the whole.

In short, we are working to put the young people back in peoplehood. As a foundation committed to helping foster vibrant Jewish life, we believe the greatest wellspring of vitality and creativity rests with the younger generation, and we see it as our

responsibility to provide young Jewish adults with the tools, resources, framing and opportunities necessary to help create the most empowered generation of young Jews ever.

Our approach to ensuring their relationship with the Jewish people and Jewish life is enduring, is rooted in our commitment to the values of pluralism, inclusivity, service and support for Israel. It also reflects both our understanding of the realities of the contemporary world and our deep sense of optimism about the Jewish future.

In the 21st century, the Jewish community faces increasingly complex challenges in ensuring we remain a people bound together by a common set of values and a shared purpose—and in finding agreement on the question at the heart of it, why be Jewish?

One-size-fits-all Judaism is a thing of the past. We live in an age defined by choice and change. One in which being Jewish is only one component of increasingly multi-faceted identities, and new technologies have expanded our sense of community beyond the physical to include the virtual. As a result, traditional methods of engagement are proving less effective at best—and entirely irrelevant at worst.

In this new world, the question is not who is a Jew, but rather how we can deepen the identities of all who choose to cast their lot with the Jewish people and ensure they are firmly rooted in an appreciation of our rich Jewish narrative.

And so, at the Charles and Lynn Schusterman Family Foundation, we are working to forge a new paradigm of Jewish engagement that puts the young people at the center of the relationships, experiences and networks we are supporting. We do this first and foremost by understanding our audience. We know that young people today are passionate and believe in their ability to help repair the world. They want to eradicate poverty, care for the environment and work for educational equity and literacy. They see themselves as global citizens, and diversity and pluralism are important to them.

We also know that they want to be where their peers are; their allegiance is based on relationships rather than institutional loyalty; they are largely self-organizers; and they are drawn to experiences and organizations in which they can be actively involved in shaping the focus and nature of the work.

Efforts to engage them with Jewish values, the global Jewish community and Israel have to reflect these realities and incorporate familiar elements from the rest of their lives in order to be relevant. Organizations like BBYO and Moishe House, which now has 46 houses in 14 countries, have seen explosive growth in their ranks because they are successfully creating consumer-centric experiences, shaped by young Jews for young Jews.

Likewise with programs such as REALITY, which actually look outside of the organized Jewish community to meet young Jews where they are, allow them to engage Jewishly through multiple aspects of their identity and provide them with opportunities to define their own Judaism in ways they find resonant.

But there is another key element to our work that goes beyond programs and organizations: we invest in great people, not just great ideas, because we understand that young Jews want to be creators, not just consumers, of Jewish experiences.

We have seen success with this approach most clearly through the ROI Community. Now in its sixth year, ROI is a community of 700 passionately committed young Jewish innovators who are creating new avenues of Jewish experiences and inspiring thousands of their peers to join their efforts. By providing space for them to network, mentor each other and create together, ROI ignites sparks that will transform the Jewish future.

And this moment is as bright as any in our history to invest in that future.

Though the term Jewish peoplehood may be a modern formulation, the belief in an underlying unity that makes an individual part of the Jewish people dates back millennia. At the heart of it, however, is the people themselves, whose diverse backgrounds, unique pathways and distinct perspectives are sources of vitality that ensure our community is able not just to survive but to thrive in a modern world.

Being Jewish is about being part of a family, a community and a people. Within the collective, however, there must be room for individual Jews to customize their own journeys and to cultivate personally meaningful connections to their Judaism. Though it seems counter-intuitive, only through nurturing individualism will the next generation of Jews feel a sense of belonging to something greater than themselves and be able to forge a lifelong commitment to our shared heritage, values and purpose.

Ultimately, our role is not to define what being Jewish should mean, but rather, to reach young people with a powerful message: that in their quest for meaning, for relevance, for transcendence, actively engaging in Jewish life and belonging to the Jewish people is a path well worth pursuing.

Lisa Eisen is the National Director of the Charles and Lynn Schusterman Family Foundation. The Schusterman Family Foundation is part of a global philanthropic network that includes the ROI Community and the Schusterman Foundation-Israel.



Paying for Peoplehood

Misha Galperin

By now, the terminology of peoplehood has been dissected and analyzed, defined, refined and thoroughly debated. No one argues about its centrality to the future of Jewish communal organizations, indeed the future of Jewish life. In a time of economic challenge, when the bonds of peoplehood are in decline in our emerging population of young professionals, the central question is not what is peoplehood or why should you care but how we can strengthen our commitment to each other collectively while paying for the privilege?

As I have said elsewhere, peoplehood is not a sexy tagline for Jewish-fundraisers but this is largely about semantics. People for years were drawn to the tagline “We are all one” because it spoke to the heart of a deeply held Jewish aspiration. Despite our many differences and segmentation, we are profoundly proud of our legacy. Being one people represented the emotional barometer of where we wanted to be in our minds and hearts.

We don’t need that less now. We need it more. We have spent the better part of the last decades stressing rights rather than responsibilities. We took care of tens of thousands of Soviet immigrants and flew planeloads of Ethiopian Jews out of harm’s way to Israel. Annually, we send tens of thousands of college students to Israel for free as if it were their right to go. We did all this out of a sense of responsibility, but it has not easily translated into a pay-it-forward sort of Jewish tax. We did this for you. What will you do for others? Instead, we may have enabled a culture of entitlement among Jews that has translated instead to a what-are-you-going-to-do-for-me-next?

And our tzedaka has been framed in the same way. What do I want to give to? What will make me feel good? I hear people speak this way about their philanthropy all of the time. One side of me says that we should encourage whatever helps motivate philanthropists and aspiring philanthropists to give. Outcomes matter. Ambitions, less so.

Part of the problem is that we want philanthropists to fund a peoplehood agenda when many of them do not feel the bonds of peoplehood themselves. We have not found

enough powerful ways to engage the very people who could make this happen. Both the Nadav and the Taub Foundation have taken significant steps in this arena but they cannot walk alone.

In a similar vein, we ask people to fund the collective when we are not taking care of the particulars that they deeply care about. What do I mean? Let's take two examples. A potential donor couple to a Federation has two intermarried children and does not feel that their Federation is doing enough outreach to interfaith families. They give not only in order to get but they still want to feel that their gift is making a difference in the lives of people who matter to them. They want to fund a collective that they are part of and they feel on the margins on the community.

On the other side of the spectrum, we find an Orthodox family who gives virtually no gift to their Federation because they are mired down in day school tuition payment and they feel that Federations have done very little to make this huge problem a communal priority. They want to fund a collective that they are part of and they feel on the margins of the community.

Strangely enough, both of these families are right and right for the same reason.

Maybe we have gone about this all wrong and that we are paying an enormous price now for encouraging so much personal, customized boutique giving. People give to what they want. Sometimes the Jewish community is the flavor of the month. More often it is not. But no one will take care of us if we don't take care of ourselves. It's a cliché, but as with most clichés, it's true. And yet we do not really know what a collective Jewish identity is today. And therein our problem lies. It is impossible to fundraise when you don't know what you're selling.

In the Bible we had a half-shekel tax. In the medieval and modern periods, we had gabbai tzedaka, community collectors who determined the Jewish tax on each individual family. It was not a matter of social expectation or status or volition. It was an obligation. We used to rely on the collective language of obligation and kindness, the fear of anti-Semitism, and the belief that we were all family. And there was no competition to speak of. We also trusted our communal leaders to make the right decisions about priorities.

In this framework, tzedaka was the way that you understood, in the most utilitarian of ways: "I scratch your back. You scratch mine." You are an anchor contributor to the community's stability and when you are vulnerable the community will be here for you.

Today we cultivate gifts. We thank people profusely. We beg when we have to. But we shouldn't have to do any of these things. Ideally, we should send people a Jewish IRS

form that says: this is what you owe this year based on what you earned and what we as a collective need. Here is your share. Paying it entitles you to its benefits in your time of need. It's a Jewish insurance policy, nothing more, nothing less.

We are far away from that now because we, unwittingly perhaps, disconnected philanthropy from tzedaka and tzedka from peoplehood. Our job now is to piece it back together and make a more compelling case. Of course, it's harder than ever now to "bring back that lovin' feeling." At the end of the day, it may not be about love anyway.

It may be a simple case of economics. You don't expect that your county or municipality is going to pick up your garbage, plow your streets in the snow and make sure your electric grid is up to par for nothing. You pay taxes and as a result, you expect something for it: a competent police force, an active sanitation crew, firefighter and ambulance crews you can depend on. That's the deal you have because you pay taxes. It's your covenant with your neighborhood. When you get sub-standard services you expect more. You're paying for it.

In the Jewish community, we expect that milestone events will be ushered in by professionals and that crises in Israel will be addressed. Seniors and youth will have spaces and services that are relevant, compassionate and meaningful. We will be a safety net for everyone. The cost: nothing. Someone else will foot the bill.

As a taxpayer, you expect more. As a Jew you should expect less. Why? Because we are not paying for peoplehood. And we can't afford not to anymore.

Since we can't send tax Jewish collectors door-to-door, we are stuck with the question of how to get people to take on responsibility for our collective entity. How do you convince the potential philanthropists that this is a worthwhile investment or a fair tax? Often, we can't even motivate donors with a strong sense of communal values to do the right thing.

Maybe we need to take a lesson from university fund-raising. Good universities are the most successful at getting contributions from their alumni. Graduates feel grateful, are asked by their peers or teachers to give back and are paving the way for their children to get the same benefits. And you can get your name on a building, a program, chair or a professorship. What would be the equivalent for the Jewish community these days since we don't have ivy-league federations?

I believe we need a tzedaka/peoplehood curriculum developed for all sorts of groups and age cohorts. The curriculum can't be simply didactic; it has to be both practical

and experiential. We need to teach the value of money and what it is really worth in communal terms. It needs to be part of every day-school, Hebrew school, camp, and Israel Experience. We need to make it a standard feature of board orientations for synagogues, JCCs and other communal organizations. We cannot assume that people will understand how communities are formed and strengthened through osmosis. We need to do a better job articulating it.

Being part of the community must mean participation in community. When we create and shape communities through Jewish experiences, we need to make sure that part of what it means to be a member is not only to benefit from the comfort of community but to take an active role in supporting it. We need a values curriculum that creates a shared lexicon of responsibility. And we don't have it yet.

Dr. Misha Galperin is the President of the Jewish Agency for Israel International Development



Jewish Federations – Jewish Peoplehood in Action

Rebecca Caspi and Lisa Friedman

Throughout the generations, the great strength of the Jewish community has been its distinct ability to organize itself. In North America this found expression through securing the rights of minorities; gaining a significant political foothold; setting up a comprehensive system of Jewish charitable, defense and educational institutions; and, providing substantial support to the State of Israel and to Jews around the world.

As we witness the current shifting social, demographic and economic trends that impact our long standing communal efforts, we note that the fundamentals of Jewish communal life nevertheless remain very much the same. There is still an enduring sense of responsibility, one for the other, across social and geographic boundaries. We are beholden to past generations for enabling our vibrant communal existence, and we are determined to bequeath to the next generation nothing less.

And yet, with today's challenges, along with the great diversity and heightened self expression among younger Jews, our sense of shared Peoplehood cannot be taken for granted. Rather it is the premier task of Jewish leadership to work hard to keep us connected and engaged as a community, willing and able to undertake responsibilities at home and abroad. In the 21st century, this requires sensitivity to the changes in our culture, the need to be relevant for this generation, to be inclusive and to provide a big tent so that the imperative notion of Jewish family, of Peoplehood, will indeed hold firm.

In many ways, this is the role of the Jewish Federations of North America. JFNA is a natural continuation of the Jewish organizational life that has accompanied our people throughout the ages. The 157 federations of our movement provide historical continuity of position and purpose. While looking inward at the changes affecting Jewish life in North America -- the economic downturn, the aging of our population, the rising cost of Jewish education, among them -- the federations also provide an essential link to Israel and Jews the world over. This is Peoplehood – the design of a system committed to raising

philanthropic dollars to respond to global Jewish needs and emerging opportunities with collective best efforts.

This most essential Jewish activity of raising charitable funds is at the very heart of the federation movement. Reflecting the spectrum of modern Jewish living, the federations represent the values and priorities of a dynamic Jewish agenda. Spearheaded by JFNA through effective strategies and coordinated efforts, and informed by the long-standing and trusted partnerships with the Jewish Agency for Israel and the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, federations stand ready with local responses to urgent global and domestic challenges.

This is Jewish Peoplehood in action – rallying Jews and Jewish communities within North America and around the world to be connected, responsible, identified and inspired. To this end, JFNA recently put into place a new, innovative system for community assessment and allocation of North American Jewish philanthropy for Israel and overseas: The Global Planning table.

The Global Planning Table is designed to be the platform where Federation leaders and professionals, Historic Partners, donors and experts generate collective action through high quality research and planning to determine priorities and response. GPT will shape a new consensus around our historic responsibility, will energize collective action for maximum impact and will provide the opportunity and capacity to tackle the principal challenges of the Jewish people worldwide.

Successful philanthropic intervention depends to a great deal on partnership. Historically, JFNA has relied extensively on JAFI and JDC. Both have enabled decades of effective and sustained activity, including working with JAFI to facilitate aliyah, to encourage a deeper relationship between Israel and younger Jews through Israel-based educational initiatives, and to confront the challenges in Israel's social and geographic periphery. With JDC, our philanthropic dollars rescue Jews in danger, provide relief to those in distress, support the renewal of self-sustaining Jewish community life, and help Israel overcome the social challenges of its most vulnerable citizens.

A joint initiative between JFNA and the Jewish Agency for Israel, P2G (formerly P2K, Partnership 2000) launched this year the International School Twinning Network, a program that connects hundreds of Jewish schools around the world with 'twin' schools in Israel. The goal is to create real connections between students and teachers across the globe, allowing global Jewry to experience Israel in a relevant and meaningful way, while creating a similar experience for Israeli youth towards their global contemporaries.

Federations also provide key funding and support for Taglit-Birthright Israel trips, MASA long-term Israel programs, and other key investments in the future of Judaism through our young people. In 2009, a Brandeis University study concluded that participants of Taglit-Birthright Israel were 16 percent more likely than nonparticipants to report feeling “very much” connected to the worldwide Jewish community. Participants were 24 percent more likely than nonparticipants to “strongly agree” with the statement, “I have a strong sense of connection to the Jewish people.”⁶

We respond to Jewish needs wherever and whenever they emerge by facilitating Tikkun Olam, a fundamental Jewish value, linking Jewish communities around the world in significant, meaningful exchanges. In recent years, Federations have raised millions of dollars for victims of natural disasters, including \$30 million for Hurricane Katrina relief, \$10 million to support JDC's response to the Southeast Asia tsunami in 2004 and more than \$1 million for relief work in Japan. Federations also contributed to JDC's Haiti earthquake relief, which topped \$8 million, and raised \$2.7 million to help Israel recover from the Carmel Forest Fire, the worst such disaster in the country's history.

At JFNA, we believe that in order to further develop and strengthen the idea of Jewish Peoplehood around the world, we must invest not only in North American Jewry, but in global Jewish life. By solidifying our commitment to Jewish Peoplehood, we take one more step forward in ensuring that future generations will be willing and able to carry on the fundamental values of the Jewish people.

Rebecca Caspi is SVP of Israel & Overseas and Director General of JFNA Israel; Lisa Friedman is an Intern at JFNA Israel

6 "Generation Birthright Israel: The Impact of an Israel Experience on Jewish Identity and Choices", October 2009



Counting on the Jews in Europe

Sally Berkovic

I like to play the numbers game. 'How many Jews do you think there are in Germany, Hungary and Poland?' I asked a group of Israeli colleagues. After a few minutes of guessing, mostly the wrong numbers, one of them observed wryly, 'The last time I did this was 30 years ago in high school when the teacher asked me 'How many Jews died in Germany, Hungary and Poland?' There is a smirk of recognition around the room. 'The Poles love us now,' chimed in another, 'all these kids throwing their dollars at the Polish tourist industry so they can visit the concentration camps and go grave-hopping.' It was a provocative statement, but one that symbolises many of the profound and troubling issues about the relationship between European Jewry and our extended family in Israel, America and the rest of the Diaspora.

The fall of Communism in 1989 ushered in a new era of Jewish possibilities in Eastern and Central Europe. Generous philanthropists and community activists rushed in to assist these struggling communities, offering funds, education, help in building a communal infrastructure, religious instruction and the capacity to leave for Israel or the USA. The Rothschild Foundation (Hanadiv) Europe was established in 2000 to assist European Jewish communities and since then, the Foundation has supported a range of initiatives that have helped thousands of Jews to discover and reclaim their long-buried Jewish roots and declare their Jewish identity. Our Museums and Archives programmes have enabled the preservation and dissemination of information about the historic Jewish presence in the area, including in areas where there are no Jews left. If Jewish Peoplehood is, at its most basic, connecting Jews with each other and increasing the sense of mutual obligation towards each other, then I'd argue that European Jewry has been doing this for a while, attempting to create bridges between East and West, and developing pan-European fora to stimulate discussion and share expertise between countries where possible. European Jewry has a lot to offer the global Jewish conversation, as we are constantly engaged in issues of diversity, identity, memory, collective responsibility, pluralism, spirituality, and every other 'ism' possible.

However, Europe is not one country. Sofia, Krakow, Barcelona, Paris, Budapest, Rome, Moscow.....each community with its distinctive character and challenges must

be understood on its own terms. It is precisely these differences that offer on-going opportunities for policy makers, philanthropists and communal professionals to generate a stimulating debate and tailor programmes that reflect the different needs in each community. Nevertheless, and despite these differences, there are some common themes emerging which need to be taken into consideration in any discussion of Jewish peoplehood and potential intervention strategies.

Firstly, young Jews are on the move across Europe. I have met young Jewish professionals from Russia, France and Poland in London, and I know of Londoners who have moved to Budapest, and Hungarians now living in Germany. Career prospects will take them to another community, romance may encourage them to stay. Many will eventually return home but some will move to America or Israel. To what extent do they see themselves as part of a global Jewish movement of relocation and transition? How much of their history do they take with them and how much do they seek to integrate as quickly as possible into their new home, removing traces of their unique European story?

Secondly, older Jews are not going anywhere. In Eastern Europe in particular, there are still Holocaust survivors living in poor conditions and being supported by organisations such as the Jewish Distribution Committee (JDC) and World Jewish Relief. In Western Europe, there is an ageing Jewish population and the only significant Jewish birth rate is amongst the Orthodox community, in particular the Haredi groups where 8 - 10 children per family is not unusual. The problem of aged care in Jewish communities is a global one, yet the rising costs of residential care will cripple European communities with limited resources to support the elderly.

Thirdly, English is generally the lingua franca between European Jews. Pan-European conferences are usually in English and most of the pan-European correspondence is in English. While there are some excellent shlichim sent by the Jewish Agency, in general, Hebrew language teaching is very poor. As English increasingly becomes the default language of the Jewish people, what does this mean for Hebrew, the language of Tanach, the language of the Declaration of Independence of the State of Israel? How can we talk of Jewish Peoplehood in any other language than Hebrew?

Fourthly, there are many Jewish identities in Europe shaped by a variety of factors. For example, in a recent study by the JDC-International Centre for Community Development, 1,270 Jews in Bulgaria, Hungary, Latvia, Poland and Romania were interviewed. The report says that 'Birth, culture, family, and values were consistently identified as the primary sources of Jewish identity.... Israel's role as an identity factor is significant for more than half of respondents in each country with the exception of Hungary. Anti-Semitism, meanwhile, plays a relatively minor role in the formation of Jewish identity

throughout the sampled countries...in each country factors connected with historical memory and the feeling of being part of the Jewish people are dominant; the religious tradition, participation in organised Jewish life, and the relationship with Israel are relatively less important...In terms of what people think about mixed marriages, the same picture develops in all of the examined countries: an increase in the number of mixed marriages is not supported anywhere, though mixed marriages are not specifically opposed. With the exception of Romania, a large proportion of respondents in all sampled countries (48%–55%) think that mixed marriages do not threaten the continued existence of the Jewish people.’ What does intermarriage in Europe mean for Jewish peoplehood?

Finally, Jewish literacy is variable across Europe. If there were such a thing as a Jewish Peoplehood index, I would argue that the small number of religious communities would have a much higher score. Many religious communities, particularly in central and Eastern Europe, have been ‘adopted’ by sister communities in America who regularly send teachers and funds to support these communities. Religious magazines such as *Mishpacha* and *Hamodia* feature the ‘rebirth’ of religious communities in the Former Soviet Union and write about the *mesirus nefesh* (self sacrifice) of the leaders of these communities who could have left for the USA or Israel but chose to remain and lead a revival of Jewish religious life. The Lauder Foundation has made a significant contribution to building and supporting Jewish schools and there are a range of independent adult education programmes scattered across Europe. Surely, Jewish peoplehood has to build on the foundations of Jewish literacy – from many different religious perspectives - for without understanding basic concepts of the Jewish lifecycle, the Jewish calendar, Jewish history and Jewish texts, it’s hard to make a rational case for feeling connected in a meaningful way to the Jewish people.

As the Jewish Peoplehood discussions evolve, do not count the number of Jews in Europe – rather, count on Jews in Europe to be a significant partner, bringing a wealth of experience, resilience and passion to the family table.

Sally Berkovic is the CEO of the Rothschild Foundation (Hanadiv) Europe



The Koret Taube Initiative on Jewish Peoplehood

Shana Penn and Danielle Foreman

“The Jewish people cannot survive by worrying only about survival; we survive and thrive as a people because we want to survive for something. Whether you believe that God commands it, or history commands it, or it’s right on its own terms, we survive and thrive because we want to have a purpose to our existence. That’s the essence of peoplehood.”

Dr. Arnold Eisen, Chancellor, Jewish Theological Seminary

In the spirit of activating Jewish Peoplehood in our own communities and worldwide, the Koret Foundation and Taube Philanthropies have come together for a collaborative philanthropic venture entitled the Koret Taube Initiative on Jewish Peoplehood (the Initiative). Officially launched in 2010, the Initiative serves as a central organizing force in reinvigorating Jewish communal interests, deepening Jewish consciousness, and stimulating multigenerational participation in Jewish life and culture in the Bay Area, Israel and Eastern Europe.

While the Koret Foundation has been making grants in the Jewish community for the past 30 years and Taube Philanthropies for the past 12 years independently, the Initiative provides a strategic framework for collaborative grant making. Together, the two foundations can leverage our resources to achieve greater impact than a single charitable entity would otherwise be able to accomplish. “Collaborative funding is the wave of the future,” notes Tad Taube, President of the Koret Foundation and Chairman of Taube Philanthropies.

The Koret Taube Initiative on Jewish Peoplehood addresses what can be done to ensure the vibrancy of Judaism and the Jewish people now and into the future. We take to heart the abiding words of Mordecai Kaplan that Judaism is fundamentally a civilization and that “collective experience yields meaning for the enrichment of the life of the individual Jew and for the spiritual greatness of the Jewish people.” The Koret Taube

Initiative has been deeply informed by Kaplan's vision of inclusiveness of multi-faceted Jewish identities and practices.

For this reason, our Initiative advances Peoplehood alternatively to emphases on individual identity by imagining a more connected, better networked sense of Jewishness, within which one's Jewish identity is a positive, not a negative or even a neutral. Peoplehood offers a language for public discourse about a common Jewish context and destiny not limited to traditional texts, religious observances or practices. It allows us to reflect a multi-centric Jewish world, in which Diaspora communities, as well as Israel, provide meaningful sites for Jewish engagement.

In order to further a Peoplehood agenda, the Taube and Koret Foundations have set clear goals:

- to increase Jewish identification and involvement in Jewish communal life worldwide;
- to inspire greater interconnections among members of the Jewish community through positive, shared Jewish learning and experiences;
- to elevate Jewish literacy through informal Jewish education focused on Jewish history, religion, culture and contemporary life;
- to increase active participation in Jewish communal activities through volunteerism and service learning; and
- to showcase connections between Jewish achievement and Western civilization.

Organizations supported by the Initiative must provide compelling answers to the questions "Why be Jewish?" and "Why participate in Jewish communal life?" Grants made in the San Francisco Bay Area under the Koret Taube Initiative on Jewish Peoplehood have helped empower organizations such as Jewish Community Centers to become expansive and stable community institutions. Large Jewish organizations continue to be the cornerstones of Bay Area Jewish communal life. However, as pointed out by two of our advisors, Rabbi Donniel Hartman of the Shalom Hartman Institute and Dr. Arnold Eisen, Chancellor of the Jewish Theological Seminary, today's Jews, particularly young Jews in their 20's and 30's, have complex, multi-faceted identities and engage in the Jewish community differently than their parents and grandparents. Young people tend to extend their "odyssey" years well into their 30's and delay their entry into established family based organizations. The presence of so many single and/or childless Jews has created opportunities for entrepreneurial programs and challenges for the bigger, well-established institutions.

Recognizing the important role this age cohort will play in the short and long-term, the Koret Taube Initiative on Jewish Peoplehood has engaged in a first round of funding to a handful of innovative “next generation” organizations. These include: the Contemporaries at the Contemporary Jewish Museum, The Hub at the JCC San Francisco, Idelsohn Society, Kevah, Moishe House, Reboot, and Urban Adamah. These programs attract young Jews through missions and activities based in fundamental Jewish Peoplehood values.

The Koret Taube Initiative maintains that Peoplehood encompasses all generations and so it is imperative that each Jew has an opportunity to connect to the community through each stage of life. In addition to the Initiative’s interest in engaging the next generation of Jews, its largest investment still supports core Jewish institutions like the five Bay Area Jewish Community Centers, Jewish Family and Children Services, academic Jewish studies programs, Hillels, Chabads, the Contemporary Jewish Museum and the Magnes Museum.

The JCCs continue to be the main portal of Jewish life that reaches families from cradle to grave. Lehrhaus Judaica and Jewish studies programs provide adults with continuing Jewish education. And cultural institutions like the Contemporary Jewish Museum and the Magnes Museum educate, celebrate and communicate how Jewish history, religion and culture have contributed to American Jewish life and to Western civilization.

Additionally, the global view of Peoplehood entails helping to reestablish Jewish life in places where it once thrived, particularly in Eastern Europe. The contemporary resurgence of Jewish culture in countries like Poland is frequently overlooked as a key component of the future of Jewish life globally, as well as the success and survival of the State of Israel. Yet our philanthropic investments in Poland, for example, strengthen the institutional life of Polish Jewry in its new democracy while simultaneously broadening the Jewish world’s understanding of Peoplehood as viewed through the historical lens of Polish Jews and its relevance to the life and culture of the Jewish people everywhere. Our major grantees in Poland include JCCs in Krakow and Warsaw, the Krakow Jewish Culture Festival, the Jewish Genealogy & Family Heritage Center, the Jewish Heritage Tourism Program, the Jewish Historical Institute, and the Museum of the History of Polish Jews.

Peoplehood is about inclusivity. It is about building community, making relationships with other Jews, and supporting one another beyond our local and national borders. Peoplehood is about cultivating a sense of purpose tied to Jewish destiny, to *brit yi’ud*, as Dr. Eisen noted in a recent lecture to our Peoplehood grantees: “If we want to survive as a people, we must have a sense of Sinai, of what one’s future is, of what is the purpose of each person’s existence.”

In these ways, the concept of Peoplehood has real-world consequences for Jewish collective identities and our existence into the future, as well as for making an impact on the global stage. Through the Koret Taube Initiative on Jewish Peoplehood, we have sought and supported intellectual leadership from around the world that advances a Peoplehood agenda. By means of our collaborative efforts, we seek to create Jewish identities that are enriched by positive Jewish experiences, cultural pride, and an ongoing sense of belonging to each other and the world.

Shana Penn is the Executive Director of Taube Philanthropies and Danielle Foreman is a Program Officer at the Koret Foundation



Peoplehood is the Consequence, not the Goal: JHub as a Case Study

Shoshana Boyd Gelfand

According to Jewish tradition, the world stands on three pillars: Torah, Avodah, and Gemilut Hasadim. Some would claim that these are the central principles which hold the Jewish people together. My Jewish childhood identity, however, stood on three completely different pillars. Like many others of my generation who grew up in non-religious homes, three of the core experiences which formed my Jewish identity were: the Holocaust, the State of Israel, and the Soviet Jewry movement. My early memories include: watching the series “Holocaust” on television with my family, listening to my parents “discuss” whether my father should answer the call for doctors to go to Israel during the Yom Kippur War, and meeting up with thousands of other Jews from around the country to march for Soviet Jewry in Washington DC. Each of these experiences made me feel part of the Jewish people. None of them had an overtly “religious” nature. None of them took place in a synagogue, camp or day school. They were experiential education at its best – not because someone was trying to educate me towards Jewish peoplehood, but because there was a legitimate cause that brought our people together.

The world has changed significantly from the Cold War days of my childhood. Back then, there was moral clarity about good and evil: The Holocaust was bad. The Yom Kippur attack on Israel was bad. Depriving Soviet Jews of their freedom was bad. It was easy for Jewish people of all stripes and flavours to come together and create a “civic Judaism” to fight these evils. The by-product of this battle was Jewish solidarity and a feeling of “peoplehood,” exemplified by the UJA slogan “We Are One.” Today, despite the rhetoric of some politicians, the lines between good and evil are more complex. The global post-nationalistic world in which we live does not lend itself to demonization of others in such simple ways. In addition, we live in a highly individualistic culture, where we all sport multiple and hybrid identities, which only adds to the complexity of constructing a new model for Jewish peoplehood.

How should a Jewish family foundation respond to this new reality? One attempt is the case study of JHub, a project of the London-based Pears Foundation. As the Pears Foundation grew over the last eight years, one of the projects they commissioned was a report to map social action provision within the British Jewish community. The report recommended offering more support for these organisations in order to enhance their presence within the community and allow for greater collaboration between them. This led to the creation of JHub (modelled loosely after Bikkurim, a non-profit Jewish incubator in New York). In 2008, JHub opened its door with three Jewish organisations as its initial residents: Tzedek (international development), JVN (the Jewish Volunteering Network), and Rene Cassin (human rights). Four years on, JHub has established itself in the British Jewish community and is starting to have an impact beyond those boundaries as well. Thus far, seventeen organisations have received support in the form of JHub shared office space, seed grants, networking opportunities, professional development and/or consultancy.

Starting in 2012, JHub is expanding its model to build on its success thus far. We have recognized that Jewish peoplehood will be constructed differently in the next generation. My childhood experience will not necessarily be the model for the future. We at JHub have witnessed how the global Jewish social action movement is growing and we want to help build the organisations, people and projects which can support it and allow it to become the next generation's "Soviet Jewry Movement." Therefore, we are growing JHub from being simply a residential incubator for organisations to also becoming a membership organisation which will create an umbrella community of people who share a commitment to Jews making a contribution to society. While JHub will certainly continue to incubate new start-up organisations, we will also create a physical networking space, a microgrants programme, and professional development opportunities for anyone working to promote social justice in the Jewish community. This will create a community of interconnected people who will work together towards a common vision of Jewish social justice. As such, JHub is now taking its place among the emerging global field of Jewish service learning and social action networking organisations such as SIACH, Repair the World, JDC Entwine, Tzedek, AJWS, ROI, Avodah, Tevel b'Tzedek, and many others.

What is going on here? Why the sudden surge in young people's commitment to social action and service learning? While I don't know for sure, I'd like to suggest that this is the way the next generation will express their understanding of Jewish mission, and thus Jewish peoplehood. This generation's commitment to making a difference – through environmental and sustainability issues, responsible business practice, human rights advocacy, international development, and volunteering – is a way of expressing their

particularistic Jewish identity while addressing issues of global concern. What is striking is that the issues they are choosing to pursue are not parochial Jewish interests; they are universal problems which will impact the future of the entire human race.

JHub was created by Pears Foundation with a shared belief that building Jewish peoplehood cannot be an end in itself. When there was an external enemy, we did not need to debate how to encourage the Jewish people to come together and share a single fate. We were defined by enemies and held together by oppression. While Antisemitism sadly still exists (which is why Pears Foundation established the Pears Institute for the Study of Antisemitism and is also the largest private investor in Holocaust education in the UK), Antisemitism no longer exhibits itself in the forms it did a generation ago. Fighting a common enemy can no longer be the primary commonality that we share as Jews. That approach will not lead to a positive Jewish identity for the next generation, nor will it serve as effective connective tissue for a sense of Jewish peoplehood.

Jewish peoplehood, I believe, will be expressed far differently in its next phase. What I see happening at JHub and beyond is a generation who are expressing their Jewish identity in universal terms. They understand the Jewish imperative to “repair the world” and they are taking steps to do so. To be sure, they would likely do this whether or not they were given a Jewish platform to do it from. They have been raised with Jewish values and in Jewish homes, so they understand this imperative in their *kishkes*.

If we want them to transmit this passion to the generation after them, however, we do need to intervene and provide Jewish language for them to articulate what they are doing and why. They need to understand and express that it is their particularistic Jewish values and tradition which, at least in part, impel them to make a difference in larger society. They need to “do social action” within the context of a non-denominational and inclusive Jewish setting in order to create a rich community of practice where there is diversity held together by a singular commitment to social justice. That is what JHub offers. We bring together Jews and non-Jews who believe that Judaism has a contribution to make to society, and we give them the support, networking, and skills training to do that with Jewish language and within the Jewish community.

In some ways, this is not so different from the way my sense of Jewish peoplehood was formed. Whereas my Jewish loyalties were garnered against a particular external enemy which was another nation-state, this generation’s Jewish energy is being focused against universal external “enemies” such as poverty and injustice. Paradoxically, it may be that the best way to promote Jewish peoplehood might be to stop focusing on it so singularly, as this makes it an insular concern in an age of universal issues. Instead, we should create more spaces and facilitate networks of people to do what is right and to pursue justice

while simultaneously expressing their Jewish identity in proud and positive language. In the same way that the Soviet Jewry movement galvanized my generation, the social action movement will galvanize the next. An enhanced sense of Jewish peoplehood will likely be a result of this if we can create Jewish communities engaged in social justice issues, but let's not jump on the social action bandwagon for that reason. Let's do it because it is the right thing to do – as Jews and as human beings. In turn, the Jewish People will benefit, but more importantly, so will the world.

Rabbi Shoshana Boyd Gelfand is the Director of JHub: Jewish Social Action and Innovation which is a project of the London-based Pears Foundation, a Jewish family foundation which focuses on positive identity and citizenship.



The Role of the Mega-Organization in the Era of Micro-Philanthropy

Steve Schwager

The term “Jewish Peoplehood” surfaced in recent years as a new way to describe the biblical statement *Kol Yisroel Arevim Zeh Lazeh* – “All Jews are responsible one for the other.” It signifies the fact that we as a people are united — across the boundaries of language, culture, and residence.

I find this latest interpretation of the biblical text an appealing term: it describes anew the maxim that was the foundation of The American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (JDC) almost 100 years ago.

Known then as “mutual Jewish responsibility,” it was the driving force behind the mobilization of Jews in North America to help their fellow Jews in Europe and in Ottoman-ruled Palestine. The year 1914, therefore, was pivotal for North American Jews: they were no longer supporting their own local needs exclusively, but were reaching out to support Jewish needs overseas. It meant the Jews of North America accepted a wide global responsibility to meet the needs of brethren they never met and would most likely never know.

Navigating a turbulent century since 1914, JDC continued its rescue, relief and renewal operations through two major World Wars, a dozen or so regional wars, one major economic Depression, many recessions, the collapse of empires, the emerging of new national sovereignties, and indeed revolutionary ideologies that have changed the course of world history. JDC, as the 911 of the Jewish People, evolved and adapted to the ever-changing needs of Jewish Peoplehood, often with very short notice.

As we approach JDC’s centennial year, we have made a series of strategic adjustments. These adjustments are essentially about one thing: adapting to the changing environment of Jewish philanthropy. We clearly see that new trends have replaced much of the old familiar rules that governed the relationship of donors and their recipient agencies. And this change is not driven from within – but by monumental external shifts in how people communicate, identify, and organize. The world is flatter, faster, and more integrated

than ever before. Individuals have more power to achieve, to be independent, and to create change. An idea can reach millions in an instant. It is within this dynamic context that we must understand the future of Jewish philanthropy.

Permit me to mention a few of those bold trends, familiar to all of us operating in this not-for-profit world:

- A younger generation of Jewish donors relate to their Jewish identity and affiliation as just one on a list of many identities they carry – choice being a defining characteristic of their demographic.
- These donors prefer to give a designated gift, earmarked clearly for a specific program, where they personally can follow their money and its impact.
- These donors tend to prefer cause-based giving, rather than organizational loyalty.
- These donors expect transparency, accountability, efficiency, and measurable impact from the organizations they support.

All of these trends can be described using one word: **micro-philanthropy**. Or: A boutique is better than a department store. A cause is better than an organization.

In this new environment, some large agencies have been feeling the squeeze of needing to make change at a seemingly lightening-speed pace. Their space is suddenly crowded by a garden variety of smaller, often one-issue charities sprouting across the philanthropic map. Dynamic and innovative individuals have launched their own organizations, and a spirit of social entrepreneurship has spawned countless new entities. And it is not only the exponential number of charities that are changing the map: it is, in a Darwinist sense, the struggle for survival of those who can adapt versus those that cling to yesterday's reality. It is difficult not to feel nostalgic for some agencies that defined the Jewish charity world for many decades and held a unique place in our communal lives. But at the dizzying pace of change in today's Jewish marketplace, it is adapt – or lose your place in the market.

So does this mark the end of the era of large agencies? Is "large" automatically a dinosaur?

The answer, in my opinion, is No. This is not the end to large agencies – at least not necessarily. If one can change, and change fast enough, there is much to offer the world.

I can speak only from JDC's own experience.

Years ago, JDC anticipated the shifting winds, rather than deplore the changes. We adopted new required standards and intensified our level of accountability and reporting.

We built a sophisticated fundraising apparatus that simultaneously supports our longstanding partners, like the Jewish Federations of North America, and individualized approaches to new non-Federation donors. We went further by reimagining our Marketing and Communications to make leaps, not steps, in speaking to the people who care about our cause.

Of note, we also launched our first effort in decades to engage young adults with our work. This new initiative was first designed and implemented, and is led, by a team of young professionals and young lay leaders. We have supported the fundamental belief that this generation knows best for themselves what they are looking for in their organizational affiliations. JDC has embraced the operating spirit of start-ups and social entrepreneurs, borrowing from the trends around us, creating the space for intra-preneurs.

Since launching this effort in 2008, we have gone from not even having a strategy for young adult engagement to now having many thousands of young adults connect with JDC through learning networks, international Jewish service experiences, and uniquely crafted leadership opportunities.

We discovered, while doing so, that a large agency can still be attractive to new younger donors. We have gained a better understanding of what attracts this rising generation, and those coming, to a large and established organization like JDC. I can state with confidence that JDC presents a compelling proposition to a new generation of philanthropists.

Here are some of the reasons why:

- A large agency often correlates with having a large purpose, addressing large challenges, and leaving a large footprint in repairing the world (tikkun olam).
- A large agency can offer a custom tailored program to fit a donor's specific interest, and many times over.
- A large agency can leverage other partners and maximize the gift dollars at even greater levels of impact.
- A large agency can have lower overhead per program, since there are economies of scale.
- A large agency can have the capacity to work simultaneously with many donors, individualized, one on one.
- A large agency is more likely to maintain Western standard transparency, accountability and efficiency and can win legal assurance (i.e. State Attorney General) and public ratings (i.e. BBB, Charity Navigator).

Therefore, one needs to be careful not to rush to the conclusion that large agencies are doomed to be extinct in this new environment. When adapting and updating their perspective and conduct, large agencies can offer the donor community a much better deal for its dollars. While the small, one-issue charities are a welcome addition to the philanthropic environment, I strongly believe that the role of large agencies is more significant than ever.

Steve Schwager is the Executive Vice President and CEO of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee



The Peoplehood Challenge: "Teach Your Children Well"

Yossi Prager

For AVI CHAI, Peoplehood reflects the notion that Jews are family, distant cousins from common ancestors, who share a stake in our ancient homeland and now modern state in Israel. This notion of peoplehood encompasses all Jews, whether or not they accept the covenantal destiny of the Jewish people, its sacred texts and modern literature, or Hebrew as a common language.

Peoplehood is an inclusive concept, perhaps the most inclusive that Judaism has to offer because it includes every Jew regardless of ideology or religious participation. At the same time it is particularistic: it posits that Jews have a deep bond with one another and Israel. Peoplehood, like family, also carries with it responsibility – in this case, to other Jews and to the family homestead or heritage home, Israel.

As modern society evolved over the past 200 years, Judaism as a religion fragmented into different denominations, and many Jews decided to leave their religion behind entirely. At the same time, the sense of Peoplehood remained strong, often held together by outside forces. In nineteenth and twentieth century Europe, anti-Semitism increased with tragic consequences. Even in America for most of the twentieth century, discrimination prevented Jews from full cultural assimilation. Many American Jews experienced some form of anti-Semitism firsthand, and all knew the horror of the Holocaust. The State of Israel was recognized as a necessary refuge even by those who did not perceive Israel as some Zionists did - as the place in which the Jewish mission could be best realized.

In contemporary America external barriers have been erased. The result has been an increasing number of Jews – some of whom identify with Judaism as a religion – who do not feel themselves to be part of a distinctive Jewish people. They do not feel a deep bond to other Jews with whom they do not have a personal relationship, and they do not feel a corresponding responsibility to them. To the contrary, influenced by contemporary American "melting pot" culture, some are offended by tribalistic expressions of Judaism. Free of the personal experience of anti-Semitism, these Jews do not see Israel as a necessary Jewish homeland or refuge, deserving of their reflexive loyalty.

AVI CHAI's investments to advance Jewish Peoplehood have focused primarily on generating an unconditional attachment to Israel, stemming from the view that Israel is both the heritage home and political home of the Jewish people. In modern America, deep attachment to Israel may not be innate, drawn from mother's milk, but learned and absorbed through education and experience. Toward this end, AVI CHAI has funded a series of programs in both day schools and summer camps. In North America, AVI CHAI has chosen these two fields as the locus of our work based on our view, supported by research, that day school and summer camps provide the foundation for the energizing nucleus of the next generation of North American Jews: young people with the values, commitments, motivation and skills to lead the Jewish People intellectually, spiritually, communally and politically in the 21st Century.

By focusing on the kindergarten through grade 12 group (and summer camp staff) as the ultimate target audience, we hope that students will from a young age develop a natural, age-level-appropriate attachment to the Jewish People and Jewish State through learning the Hebrew language immersion in intensive Jewish studies, befriending other Jews including Israelis and – as the students grow more mature – engaging in Israel's internal and external political issues. Ultimately, we believe that commitment to Jewish Peoplehood stems from, and expresses itself, in what young Jews know, feel and do.

Given the formal nature of schooling, AVI CHAI's work to promote Peoplehood in day schools relates to students' developing knowledge and feelings. Two of the programs – the TaL AM and NETA curricula – engage students directly through their core classwork. Another program, an annual workshop by Professor Ken Stein of Emory University, arms teachers with wide-ranging information about Israel's history, culture and politics. Through these programs, AVI CHAI hopes to naturally integrate into student identity a visceral connection with Israel as the heritage and political home of the Jewish people

AVI CHAI funds additional programs that are targeted directly at the war of ideas being fought against Israel. For example, The David Project offers a curriculum for high school students (primarily twelfth graders) and associated teacher training, in an effort to provide information and skills that will help students as they confront anti-Semitism on campus. Write On for Israel is a more elite program for high school students in four cities, not necessarily only those in day school, who want to prepare themselves to be Israel advocates on campus. We see these programs as follow-ons to the Israel-identity building programs in the younger grades, an opportunity for students to continue gaining knowledge and confidence as they prepare to enact their sense of connection to Israel on campus.

Education in summer camps is more experiential than in schools, resulting in AVI CHAI-funded programs that are based on experience and relationships more than study. The Jewish Agency for Israel has created a suite of programs built around the summer shlichim sent to North American camps. In the last decade, hundreds of shlichim have returned for multiple summers, allowing the shlichim to integrate with the camp staff and rise in seniority. The presence of trained Israelis at camp helps both staff and campers form relationships with Israelis and their modern reality, without --as well as through-- the mediation of formal programs.

AVI CHAI has joined with other funders to support a new program operated by the iCenter and the Foundation for Jewish Camp to offer comprehensive Israel education at 36 summer camps. AVI CHAI also funds a program through the National Ramah Commission to enhance the use of Hebrew at camps, and this effort, too, incorporates Israel education.

I know that some foundations define Jewish peoplehood programs differently, most expansively as any programs through which Jews meet and befriend one another, whether for social purposes, social justice or other reasons. For our foundation, and for others we are proud to partner with and learn from, the key measure of Jewish peoplehood success is whether participants develop an unconditional attachment and sense of responsibility to other Jews and the State of Israel. Some foundations distinguish Israel education or engagement from Israel advocacy. We respect this distinction and yet hope that students who, through Israel education, come to feel an unconditional attachment to Israel – whether or not they agree with particular governmental policies – will also feel a sense of responsibility to advance Israel's interests in the United States. Thus, our efforts are not limited to either education or advocacy.

For all of the energy and resources invested in Jewish Peoplehood programming in the past decade, the field is still in an early stage of developing benchmarks for success. We have learned about student attachments to Israel from video interviews of day school students conducted by Alex Pomson and his colleagues at the Hebrew University. We have also tracked the success of the Write On for Israel program via surveys of alumni activities while on campus. We know that the framework for assessment should track “knowing, feeling and doing,” measuring identity development and activity over time. But more specificity is needed. We hope to continue to learn from researchers and colleagues in the field at philanthropies, grantees universities and the iCenter as the field continues to develop measures and benchmarks for success.

As AVI CHAI continues to seek programs to advance attachment to Israel, I recognize that we have fallen short in one regard: the development of programs that advance the

bond between Jews globally. Peoplehood should not be reduced to Israel education. I hope that in the future, at the conceptual and programmatic level, AVI CHAI can join with other philanthropists in giving full expression to the inclusive and expansive notion of Jewish Peoplehood. We look forward to learning from one another's ideas and experiments and invite interested philanthropists to share their ideas with us.

Yossi Prager is the Executive Director – North America of The AVI CHAI Foundation

The Peoplehood Papers provide a platform for Jews to discuss their common agenda and key issues relating to their collective identity. Appearing three times a year addressing specific themes you are encouraged to share your perspective. Past issues can be accessed at www.jpeoplehood.org/publications

The UJA-Federation of New York cares for those in need, rescues those in harm's way and renews and strengthens the Jewish people in New York in Israel and around the world. **The Commission on the Jewish People** is dedicated to building connections among the diverse elements of the Jewish People and develops and supports efforts to forge linkages among Jews wherever they may live and support Israel as a vibrant, democratic and pluralistic Jewish state.

The Center for Jewish Peoplehood Education (CJPE) is a "one stop" resource center for institutions and individuals seeking to build collective Jewish life, with a focus on Jewish Peoplehood and Israel education. It provides professional and leadership training, content and programmatic development or general Peoplehood conceptual and educational consulting. www.jpeoplehood.org

