

▶ Best Practices of Organizations that Build Jewish Peoplehood

A Policy-Oriented Analysis of a Field in Formation

Dr. Ezra Kopelowitz

▶ Research Success Technologies Inc.

Dr. Shlomi Ravid

▶ The Jewish Peoplehood Hub

May 3, 2010

Research sponsored* by:



*The views presented in this document are of the authors only and do not necessarily represent the project's sponsors.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

About the Authorsiv

Executive Summary.....v

 The Research.....v

 Peoplehood Consciousness.....v

 Four core practicesvi

 Building a field of Jewish Peoplehood practicevi

I. Introduction 1

II. Historical Context..... 2

 The need to opt-in 2

 “Jewish Peoplehood” signals a new stage of Jewish collective belonging..... 3

III. The Research..... 8

IV. Core Peoplehood quality: Peoplehood Consciousness 10

 The difference between Peoplehood experience and Peoplehood consciousness..... 10

 Nurturing Peoplehood Consciousness - Four Core Practices 13

V. Best practice findings by sector 17

 Education 17

 Historical overview 18

 Peoplehood checklist for educational organizations..... 24

 Religion..... 26

 Two general models..... 26

 Historical overview 27

 Peoplehood checklist for religious organizations..... 30

 Community..... 33

 Historical Overview 33

 Peoplehood checklist for community organizations 37

VI. General best practices 40

 Programs designed to build Peoplehood consciousness..... 40

 Mifgashim 40

 Leadership development and network building..... 42

 Enabling access to Jewish community 44

 Affordable community 45

 Decentralization of authority in order to encourage ownership 45

 Integration 47

 Welfare services as an engine for Jewish community building 49

 Israel as a resource for individual growth and community building 50

 Judaism as resource: Teaching Torah 53

 Training and retention of personnel..... 55

VII. Recommendations for developing the field of Jewish Peoplehood practice..... 57

 1. Shared Identity Community aligned around a common purpose and a set of core values
58

 2. Standards of Practice 59

 3. Leadership and grass roots support 60

4. Revenue base and supporting policy	61
5. Knowledge Base	61
Responses	62
David Bryfman.....	62
Lisa Grant	64
David Mittelberg	66
Appendix one - Peoplehood checklist for the purpose of discussion and planning	69
Topic 1: Organizational Mission: Peoplehood Consciousness.....	69
Topic 2: Strategy for Building Peoplehood consciousness	70
Topic 3: Organizational Questions	70
Appendix two - Some thoughts on the impact of national context	72
Appendix three: Organizations contacted for research	75

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

DR. EZRA KOPELOWITZ

Dr. Ezra Kopelowitz is CEO of Research Success Technologies and a sociologist specializing Jewish education, Israel-Diaspora relations and Jewish Peoplehood. Between 2000 and 2004, Ezra directed the Research Unit of the Department of Education of the Jewish Agency.

Ezra is a pioneer in research on Jewish Peoplehood, developing intellectual frameworks and conducting applied research in the area. The work in this research report builds on 15 years of research experience focused on Jewish Peoplehood. Ezra's work has included research on places as mundane as the Jerusalem city buses and the Knesset cafeteria (interactions between secular, Haredi and Palestinian populations), to religious and political movements, summer camps, schools, synagogues, community centers, campus organizations, Israeli Diaspora partnership programs and Israel education trips.

Publications include:

- *Building Jewish Peoplehood: Change and Challenge*. Academic Studies Press. (2008, co-edited)
- *Cultural Education-Cultural Sustainability: Minority, Diaspora, Indigenous and Ethno-Religious Groups in Multicultural Societies*. Routledge (2008, co-edited).
- *A Framework for Strategic Thinking about Jewish Peoplehood* (Position paper commissioned by the Nadav Fund. Tel Aviv. 2007)
- *Between Mifgash and Shlichut: Paradigms in Contemporary Zionist Education and the Question of the Ideological Relationship between Israel and the Diaspora*. Department of Education, The Jewish Agency (2004)

DR. SHLOMI RAVID

Dr. Shlomi Ravid is the outgoing founding director of the International School for Jewish Peoplehood Studies at Beth Hatefutsoth, founded by the NADAV Fund, and has recently joined the Jewish Peoplehood Hub. Prior to that Shlomi was the founding director of the San Francisco Israel Center which he ran for seven years – a culmination of a series of positions in the field of the Jewish global conversation spreading over 25 years.

Shlomi has been a pioneer in developing Peoplehood education, initiating publications such as the Peoplehood Papers and Peoplehood Now as well as the educational kit – Israel: the Vision and Venture the Jewish People. His PhD is in Philosophy from Tel Aviv University and academic focus is community.

Publications include:

- *Toward a Pluralistic Form of Peoplehood*, , Hayidiyon, RAVSAK (2009)
- *Israel – the Vision and Venture of the Jewish People*, Beth Hatefutsoth (2008)
- *Peoplehood – the institutional challenge*. Peoplehood Papers 2 (2008)
- *What is Peoplehood and is it the right question?* Peoplehood Papers 1 (2007)
- *Norms and Values – Continuity or Revolution*, Hakibbutz Hameuchad (1999)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Dramatic historical change is underway. Prior to World War II Jews spent most of their time with other Jews in neighborhoods in which the differences between Jew and non-Jew were clear. For most Jews, “Jewishness” and membership in the Jewish People were a taken for granted part of life. In the past 50 years Jews have entered into “the open society.” Anti-semitism has reached historical lows and in general there are no significant barriers preventing most Jews from full interaction with non-Jews in everyday life.

Given the reality of the open society, why should a Jew today, choose to be a part of the Jewish People? Jewish organizations are rising to the challenge that this question poses. In the past thirty years transformative changes have occurred within veteran Jewish organizations and new forms of organized Jewish life are appearing. The common denominator is an attempt to create compelling forms of Jewish community, or “meaningful Jewish engagement” which provide the gateway into active membership in the Jewish People for a new generation, for whom Jewish belonging is not an obvious part of life. Not accidentally, many of these organizations are using the concept of “Jewish Peoplehood” to describe the rationale for their work; and as such, the Peoplehood concept serves as a looking glass through which to understand the broader phenomenon.

This research report focuses on the “Peoplehood transformation” in three sectors: education, community and religion; and, explores universal cross-cutting issues. The goal is two-fold: 1) to describe effective Peoplehood practices through an analysis of educational, community building and religious work by Jewish organizations; and, 2) to offer a first step towards criteria for determining what differentiates a successful Peoplehood organization from others.

THE RESEARCH

Interviews were conducted from September through December 2009 with 36 contacts at 22 organizations working in six countries. Eleven organizations work in the United States, four in Israel, two in England, two operating in the Former Soviet Union, two which are international and one in Canada. In addition, use was made of other research to build a number of additional case studies.

PEOPLEHOOD CONSCIOUSNESS

The most successful organizations promote “Peoplehood consciousness” - a generalized sense of commitment to the Jewish people and its civilization, which extends over and above the immediate social encounter with other Jews. For the Peoplehood organization it is not enough simply to bring Jews into social contact with one another. The work of a Peoplehood organization needs to produce:

- **Emotional connection**
An emotional sense of being part of the Jewish People
- **Intellectual connection and know-how for connecting**
Knowledge which contextualizes a connection to the Jewish People as meaningful for the individual and skills which enable a continuing personal Jewish journey in the company of other Jews.
- **Commitment for ongoing action**
Practical contexts which enable individuals to act as a Jew on behalf of the Jewish collective.

FOUR CORE PRACTICES

Organizations which successfully enable Peoplehood consciousness among their constituents share four core practices:

1. The explicit development of broad conceptions of Jewish community
2. The adoption of a pluralistic paradigm for enabling belonging to the Jewish People
3. The emphasis on Peoplehood as involving an individual's Jewish journey, rather than socialization into a particular Jewish life-style
4. A framework for concrete commitment and action

This report calls attention to these four core practices of Peoplehood organizations and shows how they pan out in the educational, community and religious sectors, with an eye towards understanding the factors required for achieving excellence. The result, we hope, is a blueprint for understanding how Jewish organizations can respond to the challenges of contemporary society and build Jewish Peoplehood today.

BUILDING A FIELD OF JEWISH PEOPLEHOOD PRACTICE

The concluding section of the report provides recommendations for enabling Peoplehood practices to move beyond what is still a small group of pioneering organizations. For that to occur there is a need for field development. According to the Bridgestone Group a field is: *A community of organizations and individuals: 1) working together towards a common goal, and 2) using a set of common approaches to achieving that goal.* This paper establishes that there is a community of organizations and individuals who fit this definition; and hence, we can reasonably speak of developing the field of Jewish Peoplehood practice.

In order to develop the field of Jewish Peoplehood practice, five areas require development:

1. A community of practitioners aligned around a common purpose and a set of core values

2. Standards of practice
3. Leadership and grass roots support
4. Revenue base and supporting policy
5. Knowledge base

We examine each of these five areas and provide recommendations.

I. INTRODUCTION

In recent years much writing, mostly at the level of philosophy and commentary has been devoted to the concept of Jewish Peoplehood.¹ However, the field is only now beginning to push in the direction of social scientific theory and measures needed for understanding Jewish Peoplehood at the level of the everyday experience. A pioneering contribution is Steven M. Cohen's recently completed "Index of Jewish Peoplehood commitment." In that work, Cohen focuses on the attitudes of individuals towards Jewish belonging and their ability to commit to contributing to the good of other Jews. Of interest to us, are Cohen's conclusions:

Ongoing experiences with other Jews, especially Jews who share a commitment to things Jewish, serve to nurture, sustain and enhance Jewish Peoplehood commitment – and other positive features of Jewish involvement. Policies which promote Jewish association (informal networks), affiliation (ties to institutions), socialization (organic process of value inculcation), and education work to elevate Jewish Peoplehood commitment.²

Cohen is arguing that next to a study of individual attitudes, we also need to develop an understanding of the social and organizational environments in which positive attitudes towards Jewish belonging are nurtured. Such is the goal of this report. We will describe the practices of organizations that are successfully creating educational and communal environments in which participants feel a deep sense of connection to other Jews, both in their local community and world-wide. We ask: How does an organization successfully promote the feeling that "I am part of something greater," "I stand to benefit as a human being, a parent and a Jew from being of the Jewish People," and "that I want to actively shape my life as an active and committed member of the Jewish People"?

¹ See for example: Brown, Erica and Misha Galperin. *The Case for Jewish Peoplehood: Can We Be One?* Woodstock, VT: Jewish Lights Publishing. 2009; Cohen, Steven M. and Jack Wertheimer. 2006. "Whatever Happened to Jewish Peoplehood?" *Commentary*, <http://www.commentarymagazine.com/viewarticle.cfm/whatever-happened-to-the-jewish-people-10079>; Crystal, Moty. *Are we ready for 'Jewish Peoplehood'?* on Ynet: <http://www.ynet.co.il/english/articles/0,7340,L-3465116,00.html>; Kopelowitz, Ezra and Ari Engelberg. "A Framework for Strategic Thinking about Jewish Peoplehood," Tel Aviv: The Nadav Fund. 2007; Ravid, S., K. Corbin, A. Fram-Plotkin, E. Levine, and G. Most, Eds., *The Peoplehood Papers 1*, New York: UJC, 2007; and, Revivi, Menachem and Ezra Kopelowitz, editors. *Jewish Peoplehood: Change and Challenge*. Brighton, MA: Academic Press Studies. 2008.

² Steven M. Cohen, 2010. "The Power of Peoplehood: How Commitment to the Jewish People Undergirds Tzedakah for Jewish Causes," The Peoplehood Index Project and the Jewish Federation of Greater Washington. P. 22.

II. HISTORICAL CONTEXT

From a little used term, first coined in the mid-20th century, the concept of Jewish Peoplehood is increasingly used by Jewish organizations. In November 2009 alone, a track was devoted to Jewish Peoplehood at the General Assembly of Jewish Federations of North America,³ the World Confederation of Jewish Community Centers devoted its Quadrennial Conference to the topic,⁴ and a Jerusalem Post editorial⁵ and Daniel Gordis, in his widely read blog, argued for the importance of renewed efforts at reinforcing and building the sense of Jewish Peoplehood among contemporary Jewry.⁶

Much of the current focus on Jewish Peoplehood begins from a position of angst. There is a deep worry that Jews are losing the bonds of ethnic kinship and there is a general call for efforts at stemming the tide. For example Daniel Gordis, citing the success of Birthright Israel urges American philanthropists “to get the vast majority of American Jews to Israel, to witness first-hand the power of Peoplehood and, perhaps, to transform the dangerous, emerging American Jewish sense that attachment to other Jews and their state is a relic of the past.”

Against the story of decline, there is a story of renewal, which this paper tells. There are increasing numbers of Jewish organizations around the world, developing vibrant and meaningful frameworks that imbue Jews from across the Jewish spectrum with a deep sense of belonging to the Jewish People. The work of these cutting edge Peoplehood organizations stands against entrenched practices by synagogues, community centers, educational institutions, Federations etc., which contribute to the declining connection of Jews to the Jewish People. Established Jewish institutions for the most part offer models for Jewish community that are no longer appropriate for many contemporary Jews.

THE NEED TO OPT-IN

The starting point of this paper is the realization that Jewish belonging is no longer obvious or self-evident. In a free world where most Jews are full citizens of their countries the sense of belonging to a global people is no longer bred by dint of circumstance. Given that the nature of everyday life no longer generates a sense of Jewish collective belonging in an organic fashion, so Jewish Peoplehood needs to be intentionally developed and fostered. This research project focuses on organizations that are meeting the challenge.

³ http://www.jewishfederations.org/local_includes/ujcfiles/ga09/program/workshops.html

⁴ http://www.wcicc.org/TelAviv2009/Files/Conference_detailed_program.pdf

⁵ <http://www.jpost.com/servlet/Satellite?cid=1257770023547&pagename=JPost/JPArticle/Printer>

⁶ <http://danielgordis.org/2009/11/28/a-requiem-for-peoplehood/>

“JEWISH PEOPLEHOOD” SIGNALS A NEW STAGE OF JEWISH COLLECTIVE BELONGING

The “Jewish Peoplehood” concept is used in this paper as a means to the ends of making sense of rapid historical change and the implications for collective Jewish belonging. While the idea of “the Jewish People” is ancient, “Jewish Peoplehood” is a new term that came into initial use in the mid-20th century and into intensive use by Jewish organizations and intellectuals in the last decade. By examining the historical changes which underlie use of the Peoplehood concept and the organizational practices and intellectual understandings of Jewish collectivity that accompany these changes, we are able to gain a deep understanding of how Jews are creating a connection to the Jewish People in the current age.

Jewish collective belonging has undergone five shifts in the past two hundred years. As depicted in the table on the following page, each phase is identified by a dominant theme which typifies the manner in which the majority of individual Jews in a give time period integrate into Jewish communal life. The use of the Peoplehood concept signals the start of the latest phase.

Phase 1: Traditional belonging

Prior to the modern era, for an individual, Jewish collectivity is pre-determined. Belonging to the local, state mandated *Kehilla* is legislated by law. Starting in late 18th century France and slowly spreading over the 19th and early 20th centuries, the emancipation process granted Jews citizenship and with citizenship the freedom not to join a Jewish community.⁷

Phase 2: Enclave belonging

Through World War II most Diaspora Jews lived in ethnic enclaves, usually tightly knit urban communities where the social and cultural boundaries between Jews and non-Jew were reinforced through informal processes of everyday life.⁸ In pre-State Israel, the Jewish political collective (the Yishuv) constituted an ethnic enclave, and within that enclave tight social networks organized by affiliation with political-ideological movements.⁹

⁷Pierre Birnbaum and Ira Katznelson (1995) (eds.) *Paths of Emancipation*, Princeton: Princeton University Press. Gideon Shimoni (2009) “The status of Jewish Community in the Contemporary Diaspora in Comparative Perspective,” in Naama Saabar Ben Yehoshua, Gideon Shimoni and Nurit Chamo (eds.), *Jewish Peoplehood: An intellectual and practical outline for teaching and learning*. Tel Aviv: International School for Jewish Peoplehood Studies, Diaspora Museum, pp. 112-141 [Hebrew]. Daniel Elazar (1981) “The Kehillah,” in S. Lehman-Wilzig and B. Susser, *Public Life in Israel and the Diaspora* (Bar-Ilan University Press). Mark Zborowski, Elizabeth Herzog and Margaret Mead (1962) *Life is with People: The Culture of the Shtetl*, Schoken Press.

⁸ Alejaro Portes and Robert D. Manning (2005) “The Immigrant Enclave: Theory and Empirical Examples,” in Jan Lin and Christopher Mele (eds.) *The Urban Sociology Reader*, New York: Routledge. Hasia Diner, Jeffrey Shandler and Beth S. Wenger (eds.) (2000) *Remembering the Lower East Side: American Jewish reflections*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

⁹ Dan Horowitz and Moshe Lissak (1979) *Origins of the Israeli Polity: Palestine Under the Mandate*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Nature of Jewish Collective Belonging - Historical Overview			
Period	Nature of Belonging		
17 th through early 20 th centuries	Demise of traditional Jewish society <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jewish belonging legislated by regime Emancipation process slowly spreads, grants Jews citizenship and option of assimilate 		
		United States , with variations on similar theme in most major Diaspora communities (except FSU)	Israel
Late 19th century through WWII Enclave belonging	Collective belonging is rooted in everyday life <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Diaspora Jews live in ethnic enclaves. Israeli Jews live in ethnic enclaves or affiliate with movement based communities Membership in the Jewish collective remains obvious for most Jews 	Settlement (Jewish community and urban neighborhoods synonymous)	Settlement (State of Israel viewed as Jewish community, Jewish life organized in ideological movements)
Post WWII through late 1960s Affiliation Era	Active membership requires choice to affiliate <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Diaspora Jews leave ethnic enclaves and must choose to affiliate with Jewish institutions. Israelis stop affiliating with ideological movements 	Affiliation Development of institutional infrastructure of suburban Jewish communities, including synagogue centers and Jewish community centers. For those born in urban Jewish neighborhoods the choice to affiliate is obvious, for their children it is not.	Disaffiliation and State building Development of a national Jewish public sphere with corresponding weakening of Jewish ideological movements.
Late 1960s through present Disaffiliation / non-affiliation / ethnic decline	Disaffiliation begins As first generation to grow up in post-WWII society comes of age affiliation era organizations start process of stagnation and decline	Stagnation and “Continuity” <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Jewish continuity” becomes communal slogan Small groups begin to search for more “meaningful” forms of Jewish community Increasing numbers of younger generation disaffiliate 	Decline <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued decline of ideological movements Stagnation and decline of forces committed to a vibrant Jewish democratic society in Israel
1980s through present Jewish Peoplehood	The rise of the meaningful engagement paradigm for Jewish Belonging <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued decline of affiliation era institutions and dropping levels of “ethnic attachment” among Jews. Development of intellectual elites with vision, knowledge and knowhow for developing alternative forms of Jewish community that are not based on the membership driven models of the affiliation era institutions. Creation of new forms of organizational Jewish life and transformation of existing institutions based on principle of meaningful engagement with Jewish life. Increasing use of the “Jewish Peoplehood concept,” alongside other similar concepts, such as “Jewish renewal” and “Jewish pluralism”. 		

Phase 3: Voluntary Affiliation¹⁰

Whereas in the ethnic enclave a Jew was Jewish by dint of living life in the ethnic neighborhood, in the voluntary affiliation phase active Jewish identity and communal belonging depends on affiliation with a Jewish organization.

In Israel the enclave and affiliation periods are one historical phase that begins to wind down with the creation of the State in 1948. In the pre-State Jewish enclave, affiliation with a socio-political movement marked a choice by an individual regarding the nature of his or her Jewish community.

In the United States and most other Western Diaspora countries, the need to affiliate with Jewish organizations, in order to be part of a Jewish community only became a major factor with the exodus out of Jewish urban neighborhoods after World War II to suburbia and the general change which has taken place in urban and communal life in general.¹¹ In the ethnic neighborhood, few Jews paid membership dues to a Jewish organization for the purpose of communal belonging. Belonging to the Jewish People came through participation in a large variety of small, functionally specific organizations, to which individuals paid for services or made donations.

For example, the synagogue in the ethnic enclave had most of its physical space devoted for the purpose of prayer. Jews using that synagogue's services would not pay membership dues, but rather paid for honors received during the religious service or made donations. The synagogue was only one node in the individual's larger Jewish communal experience. In suburbia the synagogue becomes a "Synagogue Center," a multi-dimensional institution offering a large spectrum of services, with only 10% or so of the synagogue building used for prayer. The synagogue becomes "the Jewish community" for many of its members and access to that community depends on payment of membership dues.¹²

The suburbanization process creates a situation in which collective Jewish belonging is a choice. A person must affiliate with a Jewish organization in order to actively associate with the Jewish collective. For the first generation out of the ethnic enclaves, affiliation with Jewish institutions

¹⁰ For an overview of American Jewish organizational life from 1945 through the early 1990s, see Jack Wertheimer (1995) "Jewish organizational life in the United States since 1945," *American Jewish Year Book*, American Jewish Committee.

¹¹ Alan Ehrenhalt (1995) *The Lost City: The Forgotten Virtues of Community in America*. New York: Basic Books; Robert Putnam (2000) *Bowling alone: The collapse and revival of American Community*. New York: Simon and Schuster. Marshall Sklare (1979) *Jewish Identity on the Suburban Frontier: A Study of Group Survival in the Open Society*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. Charles Zibbel (1961) "Suburbia and Jewish Community Organization," *Journal of Jewish Communal Service*, 38:1, pp. 69-79. Samuel C. Heilman. 199. "Orthodox Jews, the City and the Suburb," *In Studies in Contemporary Jewry* 15, 19-34. 1999. New York: Oxford University Press, pp. 19-34.

¹² David Kaufman (1999) *Shul with a Pool: The "Synagogue-Center" in American Jewish History*. Boston: Brandeis University Press.

was for the majority of Jews an obvious choice which many Jews made. To take membership in a Jewish organization was an act of recreating the Jewish neighborhood.

Phase 4: Increasing rates of disaffiliation or non-affiliation

In Israel, the disaffiliation era begins with the creation of the state.¹³ The new state nationalized many of the institutions which previously belonged to socio-political movements. Whereas before the establishment of the State, parents sent their children to a movement-based school, at which the Jewish vision of that movement for the Jewish state was part of the education. After the State was created children went to a state school in which a vision for Jewish collective belonging in Israel and for world Jewry was no longer the focus of the education. With the weakening of the socio-political movements Israeli Jews began to disaffiliate, en-masse.

Diaspora community institutions built in the post-WWII era were driven by the assumption that Jews will seek out the company of other Jews. Number of members served as a primary method for determining success, with the assumption being that the Jews who affiliated found Jewish life meaningful and hence didn't need a compelling reason to join.

The problems begin with those Jews who grew up outside of the ethnic enclaves and no longer saw as obvious the need to seek out Jewish friendship by affiliating with a Jewish organization. Whereas the parents grew up on the streets of city neighborhoods playing with their Jewish friends, the children attended suburban schools in which Jews and non-Jews mixed freely. The parents wanted to recreate the social experience of their youth by joining Jewish institutions, but why should their children seek out the company of other Jews?

Starting in the 1970s, outward signs of assimilation increased, with the most visible being increased rates of intermarriage. In organizational terms, many of the affiliation era institutions began to stagnate, both in terms of numbers of members and in terms of the responsive nature of the model for Jewish life which they offer their constituents. While the synagogue and community center models were appropriate for the first generation of Jews in suburbia, they became increasingly irrelevant to large swaths of the younger generations of American Jewry who are not affiliating with established Jewish organizations.¹⁴

Phase 5: Transforming organized Jewish life to emphasize “meaningful Jewish engagement” and Jewish Peoplehood

The story told in this paper begins with Mordechai Kaplan the American theologian, philosopher and sociologist, a visionary who actively pondered the nature of Jewish collectivity

¹³ Baruch Kimmerling (2005) *The Invention and Decline of Israeliness: State, Society, and the Military*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

¹⁴ Steven M. Cohen and Ari Y. Kelman (2007) “The continuity of discontinuity: How young American Jews are connecting, creating and organizing their own Jewish lives,” Andrea and Charles Bronfman Philanthropies. P. 16.

and the manner in which Jewish institutions enable such belonging to occur. Kaplan coined the term “Jewish Peoplehood”¹⁵ as part of his search for a term to describe the complex nature of Jewish belonging as he saw it in post WWII America. Ami Bouganim notes that prior to 1954, Kaplan used the term “nationhood” or “civilization” to describe the Jewish collective.

In 1954, however, Kaplan feels the need to qualify the comments he made in 1935. Kaplan rejects the concept of nationhood, offering in its place the concept of peoplehood. In the preface to a new edition of his book Judaism as a Civilization, he writes: “The concept ‘nationhood,’ as applied to the Jews, has come to be closely identified with statehood, and was, therefore, in need of being replaced by the concept ‘peoplehood’”¹⁶. In a series of articles written after the establishment of the state, Kaplan frequently used the term Jewish peoplehood.¹⁷

After Kaplan introduced the term, it slowly came into use with growing intensity towards the end of the 1990s¹⁸ in the United States and then Israel.¹⁹ The term is still primarily used in the United States and Israel and less so in other countries, a topic which we broach in an appendix to this paper on what we might learn from comparative national research.

At the same period of time that the Jewish Peoplehood concept comes into use in the United States and Israel, so too are there accompanying changes in select organizations who are pioneering changes in the nature of organized Jewish communal life in these two countries and elsewhere. Transformative changes are occurring within affiliation era organizations and new forms of organized Jewish life are appearing. The common denominator is an attempt to create compelling forms of Jewish community, or “meaningful Jewish engagement” which provide the gateway into active membership in the Jewish People for a generation who did not grow up in a Diaspora ethnic enclave or in the strong ideological environment of pre-State Israel and the immediate years after the creation of the State. Not accidentally, many of these organizations are using the term Jewish Peoplehood to describe the rationale for their work. The coming pages will examine educational, religious and welfare organizations that are among the “Peoplehood pioneers” in their respective sectors, in Israel, the United States with some examples from other countries.

¹⁵ Mordechai Kaplan (1959) *A New Zionism*. New York: The Herzl Press & The Jewish Reconstructionist Press.

¹⁶ Mordechai Kaplan (1967 (original publication date 1937)). *Judaism as Civilization*, New York: Schocken Books. p. IX.

¹⁷ Quoted from Ami Bouganim (2008) “Jewish Sectarianism and Jewish Peoplehood,” in Menachem Revivi and Ezra Kopelowitz (eds.) *Jewish Peoplehood: Change and Challenge*. Boston, MA: Academic Studies Press. P. 84

¹⁸ Steven M. Cohen, writes (in personal correspondence) that based on a search of the Berman Jewish Policy Archives (<http://www.bjpa.org>) he found 358 items which use the word “Peoplehood”, about 9% of the total BJPA collection. The earliest appearance is in 1958, with the next appearance in 1970.

¹⁹ For an overview of intellectual schools of thought that have developed around the Peoplehood concept see Ezra Kopelowitz and Ari Engelberg (2007) “A Framework for Strategic Thinking about Jewish Peoplehood,” Nadav Fund. Available at http://www.nadavfund.org.il/Peoplehood_Position_Paper.pdf.

III. THE RESEARCH

The goal of the research is to understand effective Peoplehood practices through an analysis of educational and community building work undertaken by Jewish organizations; and, to offer a first step towards creating a systematic set of criteria which measure successful Peoplehood practice by organizations.

The research consists of interviews with key contacts in 22 organizations upon which the best practice case studies for this project are built. Interviews were conducted from September through December 2009²⁰ with 36 contacts at 22 organizations working in six countries – eleven working in the United States, four in Israel, two in England, two operating in the Former Soviet Union, two which are international and one in Canada. In addition, use was made of other research on Jewish organizations to build a number of additional case studies. The list of organizations contacted is available in appendix three.

The organizations were selected based on three sets of criteria.

Firstly, selection was based on recommendations, reputation and in some cases the authors' acquaintance with the organization as a result of previous research. In all cases, the selected organizations are well recognized in the Jewish world as doing innovative and excellent work.

Secondly, the organizations all pursue a clear agenda. They are consciously reacting to the larger historical trends identified above and are doing it well. These organizations do not necessarily use the concept of Jewish Peoplehood to describe their work, but are responding to the need to create new forms of Jewish organizational practices in order to make Jewish life compelling to a new generation.

Thirdly, we applied general criteria that focus on “middle of the road” approaches to Jewish collective life. These criteria were developed in previous research²¹ and include:

1. A multi-dimensional experience

All organizations selected for this research project understand Jewish belonging as multidimensional and complex. In order to create compelling Jewish frameworks for Jews who wish to live Jewish lives fully integrated into contemporary society it is necessary to embrace and even celebrate this complexity.

2. Moderate ideology

Embracing complexity requires development of a moderate approach to Jewish life. The organizations covered by this research project reject strong ideologies which lead to an

²⁰ Some of the interviews were conducted earlier in 2009 for different research projects and revisited for the purpose of this project with permission of and further contact with the organizations involved.

²¹ Kopelowitz and Engelberg. Ibid.

overemphasis of one aspect of the Jewish experience or another; the goal is to enable constituents to live in both Jewish and non-Jewish worlds simultaneously with all the complexity that such a life style involves.

3. Focus on connections between all Jews - not on either the Jewish identity of individuals or the particular Jewish organization

The organizations selected do not focus exclusively on either the "Jewish identity" of individuals or the factors which identify Jews as a group; but rather, on the nature of connections between individual Jews and the Jewish People. The concern is with common elements and frameworks that enable Jews to connect with one another intellectually, emotionally and socially.

The role of the research is to learn how the organizations implement these "middle of the road" Jewish collective principals in practice; including, outstanding organizational and curricular practices, perceived benefits to individual participants, organizations and communities and challenges in implementing successful work.

IV. CORE PEOPLEHOOD QUALITY: PEOPLEHOOD CONSCIOUSNESS²²

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN PEOPLEHOOD EXPERIENCE AND PEOPLEHOOD CONSCIOUSNESS

Peoplehood experience

Peoplehood experience occurs when Jews of different backgrounds come together in a social interaction. A successful Peoplehood program will create a powerful *social experience of connecting to other Jews and hence an experience of Jewish Peoplehood*; however, only the more sophisticated organizations go beyond the social experience and offer an educational program designed to generate *Peoplehood consciousness*.

Peoplehood consciousness

Peoplehood consciousness²³ is a generalized sense of commitment to the Jewish people and its civilization, which extends over and above the immediate social encounter with other Jews.

While a successful Peoplehood experience is measured by the level of engagement of the participants with the Jewish collective, it is by definition limited to the "here and now" of the experience. Peoplehood consciousness entails integrating the Jewish People into the participants' value system so it becomes part of their world view. What this requires, beyond an engaging social experience, is a process of reflection on what belonging to the Jewish People means. What is the relevance of the Jewish collective to one's personal Jewish life and how does that connection impact one's responsibilities and actions in the world?

Peoplehood consciousness includes:

1. **Emotional connection**

An emotional sense of being part of the Jewish People

2. **Intellectual connection and know-how for connecting**

Knowledge which contextualizes Peoplehood as meaningful for the individual and skills which enables a continuing Jewish journey in the company of other Jews.

3. **Commitment for ongoing action**

Practical contexts which enable individuals to act as a Jew on behalf of the Jewish collective.

²² This discussion focuses on organizations. Other attempts to define the core qualities of Jewish Peoplehood exist. Kopelowitz and Engelberg. *Ibid.*, focus on Jewish intellectual discourse. Two additional attempts have been made with a specific focus on education. See, David Mittelberg (forthcoming 2010), "Jewish Peoplehood Education," in H. Miller, L. Grant, L. and A. Pomson (eds). *The International Handbook of Jewish Education*, Springer, The Netherlands. And, in Naama Saabar Ben Yehoshua, Gideon Shimoni and Nurit Chamo (eds.) (2009) *Jewish Peoplehood: An intellectual and practical outline for teaching and learning*. Tel Aviv: International School for Jewish Peoplehood Studies, Diaspora Museum, pp. 13-16 [Hebrew].

²³ We draw inspiration from the Marxist tradition of "class consciousness," which promotes the idea that significant historical change occurs when "awareness" and "action" come together. A collective identity emerges, which extends beyond emotional identification and to concrete practices and commitments.

What is required for Birthright to serve as the basis for Peoplehood Consciousness?

In research on Birthright Israel alumni Saxe, Chertok and Sasson (see footnote 26) draw a distinction which is similar to the Peoplehood experience and Peoplehood consciousness concepts introduced in this paper. The former they refer to as “Jewish tourism” the latter as “Jewish traveling.”

Our findings suggest that years later most alumni continue to view Taglit as a watershed experience. It catalyzed their personal connection to the Jewish people, Israel, and their own Jewish identity. However, as post college-age young adults, they remain “tourists” in the Jewish communal world, sightseeing at a few programs but, overall, struggling to find ways to connect. Moreover, given their developmental stage of life, modest Jewish experiential background, and limited knowledge, most alumni are not yet ready to become full-fledged “citizens” of their Jewish communities. Accordingly, we propose an alternative model to tourism and citizenship for engaging Taglit alumni and their peers. Jewish communal strategy should encourage young adults to become “travelers” who take an active role exploring what it means for them to be Jewish in a self directed process of discovery. P. 2.

The authors use the term “traveler” in much the same way as this report has been focused on “Jewish journeys.”

The measure of success is the ability to empower individuals to intensify their personal Jewish journeys in the company of other Jews.

The following are the policy implications:

Relating to Taglit alumni and their peers as travelers will entail policies that equip young adults with the information, skills, motivation, and support needed to become active explorers of Jewish community and Jewish life. It will also entail further development of young adult programs and activities so that centers of Jewish life become rewarding sites for young adult exploration. Meaningful exploration during the young adult years is the best way to foster future citizenship. P. 2

The authors’ accompanying policy recommendations reflect the best case practices detailed in this paper.

Peoplehood consciousness will not happen if individuals are placed in a classroom or ceremony in which they sit passively. In order to internalize the value of Peoplehood, the individual needs an opportunity to express individuality. The sophisticated Peoplehood program empowers participants to take concrete actions which evoke a sense of commitment to his or her personal Jewish journey and to the global Jewish People. An individual enters into a relationship with the Jewish collective that is at once a personal, and hence meaningful, but at the same time plays out in a collective framework.

Taglit-Birthright Israel²⁴ provides a high profile case study for understanding the fine line between a program which clearly generates Peoplehood experience, but around which a debate exists regarding its ability to generate Peoplehood consciousness. On one hand, research shows that participants leave the intense social and emotional experience the Israel trip with a heightened sense of belonging to the Jewish People and even increased likelihood of Jewish marriage.²⁵ On the other hand,

²⁴ <http://www.birthrightisrael.com>

²⁵ Leonard Saxe et. al. 2009. “Generation Birthright Israel: The Impact of an Israel Experience on Jewish Identity and Choices.” Maurice and Marilyn Cohen Center for Jewish Studies, Brandeis University.

research is also showing that participation in Birthright is not leading to significantly higher involvement in Jewish community in the years immediately after the Israel trip (see case study on the previous page).²⁶

Taglit-Birthright Israel in its current form is not well designed to facilitate the continuing Jewish journey of participants in a collective Jewish context. The creation of *Birthright Israel Next* in 2007 by the Birthright Israel Foundation is an effort in the direction of addressing this issue by offering post-program opportunities for Jewish involvement. However, if Peoplehood consciousness is the goal, then the design of the educational program during the trip must necessarily mesh with the goals for what occurs after the trip, including a focus on the motivation, skills and knowledge needed to successfully pursue a continuing Jewish journey with other Jews.²⁷

Shaul Kelner shows how Birthright’s educational methodology is designed to produce powerful social and emotional experience, yet it is an experience which stands apart and isolated from the complexities of Jewish life to which participants return.

*Before they arrived in Israel on the social experiment-cum-tour, Birthright Israel participants juggled the multiple identities, roles and responsibilities that are part and parcel of ordinary life. Birthright Israel offered a time-out-of-time in which it structured a social environment that encouraged people to overlook the complexities of identity and instead to construct a radically simplified conception of who they were. When all was said and done, the program suggested, they were Jews. Period. This is why they came to Israel. This is what bound them together as a group. This is what tied them to the land they were walking on. Anything else was secondary. This inevitably ignored or downplayed other self-definitions—a fact that bestowed upon this sense of Jewish self both its potency and its fragility. ... Upon the dismantling of the liminal environment and re-entry into life’s routine, the alternative self-definitions that had been temporarily submerged inevitably resurface. In this altered social context, the sense of core Jewish self that the trip fostered has to ground itself anew or wither*²⁸

The strong experiential and cognitive distinction between the Birthright trip and life as it is lived outside of the trip, makes it difficult for a participant to easily use the trip as a jumping board

²⁶ Leonard Saxe, Fern Chertok and Theodore Sasson (2009) “Tourists, Travelers, and Citizens: Jewish Engagement of Young Adults in Four Centers of North American Jewish Life,” Maurice and Marilyn Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies, Brandeis University. <http://ir.brandeis.edu/bitstream/handle/10192/23170/comstudy032309.com.pdf?sequence=1>

²⁷ We wish to acknowledge the initial steps Birthright Next is putting into place. See an op-ed by the Birthright Next director on this topic: <http://ejewishphilanthropy.com/birthright-israel-next-and-the-invisible-doubling-effect/> . Also see the perspective of the Jim Joseph Foundation, a funder Birthright Next’s, on this topic: <http://blogs.jta.org/philanthropy/article/2010/01/06/1010048/guest-post-other-orgs-can-learn-from-post-birthright-peer-to-peer-success2>

²⁸ Shaul Kelner. Forthcoming. Constructing Jewish Belonging through Mass Tourism: Self-Narration in Israel Experience Programs, Forthcoming in Cohen, Steven M., Harvey Goldberg and Ezra Kopelowitz, eds. *Dynamic Belonging: Shifting Jewish Identities and Collective Involvements in Comparative Perspective*. Oxford and New York: Berghahn Books.

for intensifying his or her Jewish journey with other Jews after the trip. The leap from the engaging experience to the development of a sustained commitment to the Jewish people requires additional educational intervention.²⁹ Too much is left to individual participants to figure out on their own.

NURTURING PEOPLEHOOD CONSCIOUSNESS - FOUR CORE PRACTICES

A common quality shared by all the organizations selected for this research report is their dedication to the idea of Jewish community as a primary ingredient for Jewish Peoplehood. To be Jewish happens in community – a network of individuals who interact with one another in a sustained fashion, which then serves as a gateway into the global Jewish collective. In this sense there is “continuity” with the past. However, the Peoplehood organizations offer a “transformative” understanding of the nature of Jewish belonging within a communal context. The nature of Jewish community has changed.

We tackle the nature of changing conception of Jewish community and hence the nature of the connection between Jews and the Jewish People by looking at the four core practices which appear among the organizations contacted for this research project. The combination of the four practices is essential for nurturing Peoplehood consciousness.

a. The explicit development of broad conceptions of Jewish community

Whilst nothing revolutionary in the broader scope of Jewish history, Peoplehood organizations differ from many synagogues and community centers created in the post-WWII affiliation period, in that there is a deep appreciation that a single organization, unto itself, cannot and should not constitute “a Jewish community.” For example, the concept of a “synagogue community” only has Peoplehood meaning if the synagogue is a gateway into a broader Jewish community, which extends beyond the four walls of the particular institution. The Peoplehood organization understands that its mission is to enable its constituents to have multiple, continuous and overlapping interactions with other Jews in different places and with different organizations. The organization will pursue collaborations with other organizations, both locally and globally in order to encourage an expanded conception of Jewish community to take hold.

b. The adoption of a pluralistic paradigm of Jewish Peoplehood

Where the Peoplehood organizations do represent historical innovation is in the development of intentionally pluralistic or inclusive Jewish community, which actively embraces and welcomes Jews with different Jewish backgrounds and different ideological approaches to Jewish life. The organizing logic is: “If the global Jewish collective includes Jews of many types,

²⁹ See Lisa Grant and Shlomi Ravid, “*Peoplehood: Towards a Pedagogy of Commitment*,” work in progress.

then the experience we offer our constituents must model this core condition for Jewish collectivity.”

As will be discussed in the coming pages, there are two basic approaches to pluralism.

- Organizations, particularly religious organizations, which have a clear world view and whose programs are not internally pluralistic, but which embrace collaboration and cooperation with organizations who are different from themselves; hence, contributing to an inclusive Jewish public sphere.
- Organizations whose programs are pluralistic, in that they are designed to accommodate different Jewish worldviews and life-styles.

c. The emphasis on Peoplehood as involving an individual’s Jewish journey, rather than socialization into a particular Jewish life-style

The Peoplehood organizations covered in this paper all focus on the idea of “meaningful engagement” of individuals with Jewish life in communal contexts. The meaningful engagement concept has two parts:

- Meaning – an appeal to intellect and emotion
- Engagement – acting, doing to create social engagement with other Jews

Meaningful engagement is about motivating and enabling an individual Jew to pursue his or her personal Jewish journey in the company of others. Peoplehood organizations provide the social context, knowledge, ideology, skills and motivation to enable an individual to successfully pursue a Jewish life. Peoplehood organizations are less concerned if that Jewish life is lived according to a particular Jewish ideological creed; rather that the constituents will leave their organization with a generalized sense of responsibility for the future of the Jewish people. Participants in a successful Jewish Peoplehood program leave that program with the Jewish People in their *kishkes*. They are compelled to continue their Jewish journey and have been given the tools to do so in the company of other Jews.

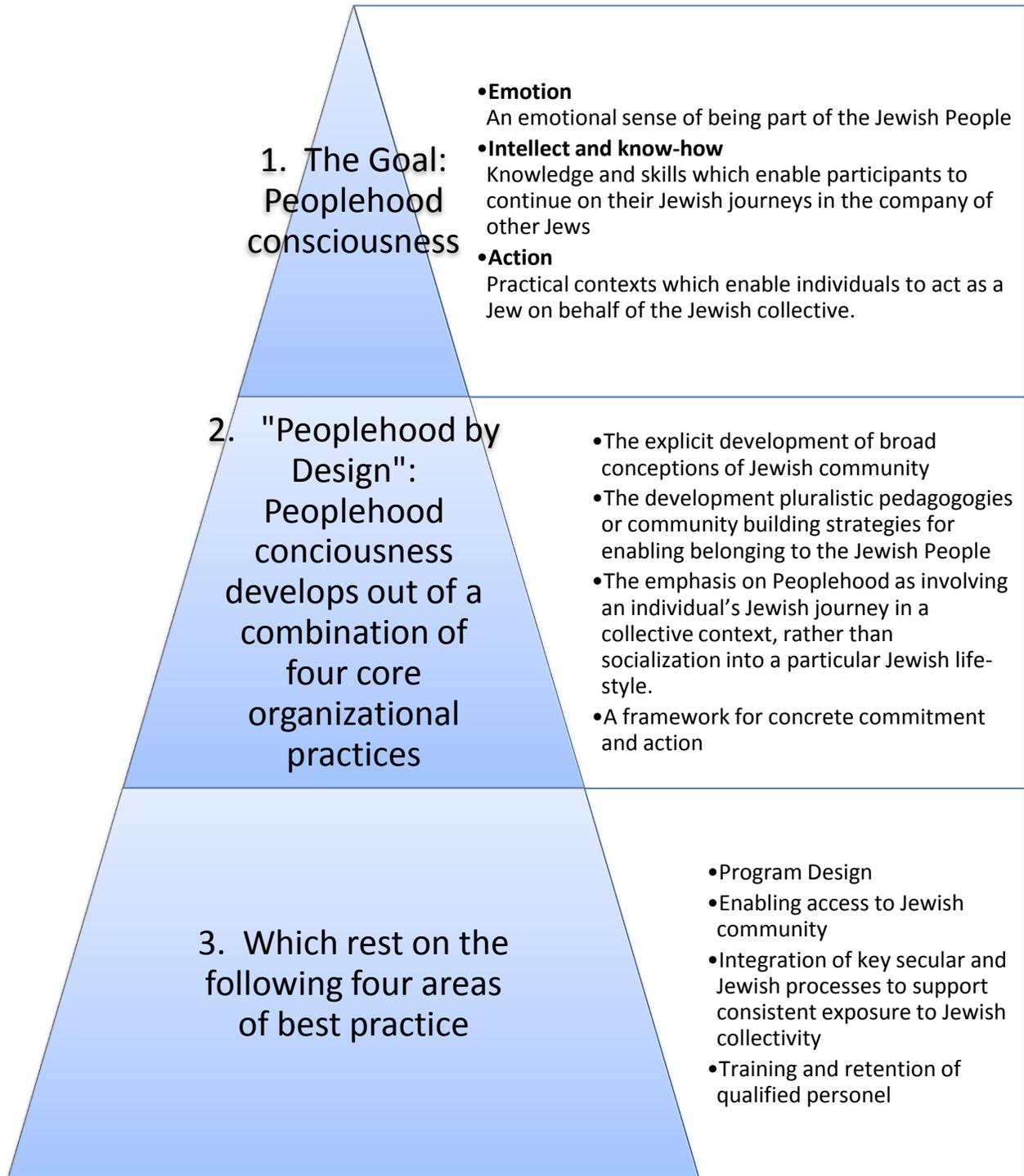
d. A framework for concrete commitment and action

A Peoplehood organization perceives meaningful engagement with the Jewish collective as a core activity of its organization. The organization is a practical framework for enabling concrete commitment and action within a collective Jewish context. Peoplehood constitutes the organization – all areas of activity from branding, marketing, communications, recruitment, staff and the educational program integrate neatly with sources of revenue that complement and support the organizations work. As a result, the organization’s constituents will perceive meaningful Jewish engagement as a core activity of their experience with the organization and

not as an extra-curricular activity. In short, engagement with the Jewish collectivity is perceived as a core responsibility of all who come into contact with a Peoplehood organization.

The importance of this work is to call attention to these four core practices of Peoplehood organizations and provide insights into the factors that contribute to success and organizational excellence. The result, we hope, is a blueprint for understanding how Jewish organizations can respond to the challenges of contemporary society and build Jewish Peoplehood today. The coming pages cover organizations from diverse sectors and movements of Jewish life in Israel, the United States and elsewhere; which, despite the differences between them have a similar vision of Jewish communal life and the role of their organizations in promoting Jewish collectivity in contemporary society.

Overview of Best Practices



V. BEST PRACTICE FINDINGS BY SECTOR

This section illustrates how the four core Peoplehood practices are implemented in different sectors of the Jewish world.

Three sectors are reviewed: 1) education, 2) religion and 3) community. The division between sectors is analytical, in that the vast majority of cases an organization working in one sector also works in other sectors. In fact, the crossover between religion, education, community-oriented work, is often by design. Many of the organizations perceive an integrated approach to building Jewish community as a core part of their work. Such an approach views Judaism, Jewish life and belonging to the Jewish People as a multi-faceted life-experience that is reflected in the workings of their organizations.

EDUCATION

This section focuses on organizations whose primary purpose is education; although, much is relevant to other religious and communal organizations reviewed in this paper all of which have an educational focus to their work.

David Mittelberg (forthcoming 2010), "Jewish Peoplehood Education," in H. Miller, L. Grant, L. and A. Pomson (eds). *The International Handbook of Jewish Education*, Springer, The Netherlands.

- ✓ Jewish peoplehood education enhances the identity of Jews by virtue of the connectivity between different types of Jews.
- ✓ Jewish peoplehood education seeks to discover commonalities among Jews from different countries out of respect for differences between them.
- ✓ Jewish peoplehood education is propelled by soft ideology and seeks to build bonding social capital between Jews of different ideological persuasions and different backgrounds.
- ✓ Jewish peoplehood education recognizes the importance of the Hebrew language and culture but engages Jews in a multi-lingual framework.
- ✓ Jewish peoplehood education is symmetrical, reciprocal and mutual, thereby laying the groundwork for synergy within the global Jewish community.
- ✓ Jewish peoplehood education strives to establish transnational frameworks of activity amongst school populations that include students, teachers, parents and community institutions, thereby striving to generate communities that are infused with a strong sense of belonging to a global Jewish people.
- ✓ Pedagogic goals of Jewish peoplehood education for participants include emotional commitment, reciprocal knowledge, caring and engagement based on global Jewish literacy.
- ✓ Jewish peoplehood education occurs in an environment where multiple identities are valued as a virtue, constituting recurrent transnational personal Jewish relationships, embedded in institutionalized school-to-school partnership relationships.

HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

Prior to the 1990s most educators who dealt with Jewish education were either avowedly secularist, Zionist and/or denominational in their focus. There were few educational organizations in the Jewish world with mission statements that explicitly declared pluralistic Jewish education as a goal. The first signs of change appeared in the 1980s with a steady growth from the 1990s onwards of Jewish educational organizations developing a focus in pluralistic or inclusive Jewish education of the type that this paper refers to as core Jewish Peoplehood practice. New types of organizations have appeared and existing organizations have transformed their approach to Jewish education.

School age

There has been tremendous growth of options for Jewish education of children that are not focused on a particular stream of religion and explicitly view as their mission the development of a sense of belonging to the global Jewish People. In the United States, there is the general growth which has occurred in liberal day school education and within that the growth of the RAVSAK school network. RAVSAK schools explicitly focus on creating inclusive Jewish

RAVSAK: The Community Day School Network

Headquarters: New York

Website: <http://www.ravsak.org/>

***Excerpts from interview with Dr. Marc Kramer, Director**

“RAVSAK’s rasion detre is to serve, foster, make day schools by design and not default to serve a large spectrum of the Jewish community.

.... There are four basic types of community day schools: 1) Authentically pluralistic, 2) Trans-ideological with representation of the various denominations, 3) Non-denominational, focusing on a common ground Judaism, and 4) Open others, schools which are denominationally oriented, but broadcast to a constituent base that is not aligned with a particular denomination.

.... RAVSAK promotes a policy in which education is deeply rooted in sacred text, Israel and Hebrew. Judaism intense, but without a template.

.... At community day schools, the school is not overly involved in life of family as they get into trouble when school behavior is mandated onto the family. While this is a legitimate aspect of a denominational school, it is the case for a community day school where they are trying to serve a lot of different types of families.

... At major convenings sponsored by RAVSAK there is never conflict with Shabbat or Yom Tov. All food is Kosher to enable a involvement of professionals from across the religious spectrum. We also ask participants to interact as with one another, in the same way that we ask of our children to interact in school. This includes: 1) Jewish Learning, 2) Davening, 3) Birkat hamazon. The result is that participants feel that they part of something bigger.”

educational environments and today the network includes over 120 affiliated schools serving 30,000 students in the United States.³⁰ In addition to the RAVSAK schools, significant changes are also occurring in the approach of Reform, Conservative and modern-Orthodox educators to topics such as inter-denominational relations, Israel, Hebrew and Jewish community (see section on the Religious sector).

In Israel there is the growth of the Meitarim schools, which are dedicated pluralistic schools³¹ and supplementary programs such as those provided by the TALI Education Fund³² and ORT's "Israeli Roots" project³³ which provide pluralistic Jewish education to non-Orthodox schools. Until 2008 the Israeli school system was officially divided between secular and religious schools, with neither providing a significant focus on Jewish pluralism or a connection to the contemporary global Jewish community. In 2008 the Knesset created a third school system based on pluralistic Jewish principles. A force behind the pluralistic education law is the Meitarim School Network, whose mission is based on a "philosophy of pluralism, combined with the values of tolerance, humanism, and Jewish Peoplehood."³⁴ Founded in 2002, the Meitarim Network has grown in the span of seven years from one school with 60 students to a national network including 14 kindergartens, 17 schools, and two post high school Jewish leadership institutions with approximately 4000 students. Full implementation of the pluralistic education law begins in the 2009/10 academic year with 8 pilot schools to expand within two years to 100 schools, including Meitarim schools.³⁵ Another Israeli Peoplehood organization has done substantial work on behalf of pluralistic Jewish education in Israel is *Panim for Jewish Renaissance*, which serves as an organizing framework with 50 partners among pluralistic Israel Jewish civil society organizations and is involved in an on-going lobbying effort to increase support for Jewish education in the school system. Many of the organizations with which Panim partners also provide pluralistic Jewish educational services to Israeli schools.³⁶

Finally, another significant recent development is the growth of school twinning programs between Israeli and Diaspora schools. In 2009 the twinning programs involved 159 Israeli schools, 17,000 Israeli pupils, 211 Diaspora Jewish schools, 11,160 Diaspora pupils and hundreds of educators from both Israel and the Diaspora. These numbers do not include at least another 100 schools engaged in similar programming outside the Jewish Agencies

³⁰ <http://www.RAVSAK.org/about-RAVSAK/who-we-are/>

³¹ <http://www.Meitarim.org.il/>

³² <http://www.tali.org.il/>

³³ <http://shorshey.ort.org.il>

³⁴ <http://www.Meitarim.org.il/english/content.asp?pageid=1>

³⁵ Interview with Rabbi Michael Melchior. This interview was undertaken for a research project on the Meitarim School Network. See Ezra Kopelowitz and Stephen Markowitz (2010 forthcoming) "Furthering Pluralistic Jewish Education in Israel: An Evaluation of the Meitarim School Network," research report commissioned by the Meitarim School Network.

³⁶ <http://en.panim.org.il/p-188/>

Partnership 2000 framework eg. see for example the case of the Department of Jewish Peoplehood – Oren, Shdemot (on this page).³⁷

Young Adults

As with other sectors, educational programming aimed at young adults, primarily on campus, has undergone a substantial growth of pluralistic Jewish learning opportunities in the past twenty years. These include the growth of academic Jewish Studies³⁸ and Israel Studies.³⁹ However, most of the academic programs, while certainly significant for the personal Jewish growth of students who take advantage of the courses offered at their universities, would not qualify as Jewish Peoplehood education. Academic studies tend to be classroom and discipline based and not designed to impact the student's personal and communal lives.

The one area in which Peoplehood education is coming into academia are at teacher education and community development programs such as those run by Oranim College (see case study on this page) and on a smaller scale at a number of other Israeli and American teacher education institutions.⁴⁰

Oranim College

Location: Tivon, Israel

Website: <http://www.ornanim.ac.il>

Oranim College represents an example of an academic institution which actively engages in Jewish Peoplehood education. The college offers four areas for involvement, the combined effect of which is to create a holistic environment which faculty and students can move through as they deepen their intellectual and lived connection with the Jewish People.

Dept. of Jewish Peoplehood – Oren, Shdemot Center for Community Leadership

Community development through management and facilitation of twinning programs between Israel and Diaspora schools and communities. Mifgashim between Oranim students and Diaspora students attending Oranim's educator programs. In service and pre-service professional development for Israeli and Diaspora educators.

Hamidrasha

Community development programs focused on pluralistic spiritual communities in Israel. Programs include a two year program for leaders of learning groups aimed at educators and community activists and programs aimed at supporting activists developing pluralistic Jewish communities. HaMidrasha runs a twinning program with the Bnei Jeshrun Kehilla in New York.

Concentration in Jewish Peoplehood studies

BA students have option of a multi-disciplinary track as part of one of two concentrated required for the BA degree.

Pre-military academy

Post-high school pre-military program focused on community leadership and Jewish learning.

³⁷ Numbers provided by the Jewish Agency's Israel Department.

³⁸ As of 2003 there were over 100 Jewish Studies Departments at American Universities, see <http://www.forward.com/articles/7364/>, with many more offering at least one Jewish Studies course.

³⁹ As of 2007 there were nine Israel studies centers, with 47% of universities covered in a survey of 386 institutions offering one Israel Studies course, 25% offering 2 or more course. See, "A survey of Israel Studies on American College Campuses," (2007) Published by the Israel on Campus Coalition http://www.israelcc.org/resources/Israel_Studies_Survey.htm

⁴⁰ Yehuda Bar Shalom (2003) "The Implementation of the 'Gvanim' project for Jewish Peoplehood studies at three teacher colleges [Hebrew]. Jerusalem: Department of Education, The Jewish Agency for Israel.

In the United States⁴¹ Jewish Peoplehood educational opportunities on campus and for university aged Jews are primarily provided outside of the classroom in the area of informal education. Many of the best known programs focus on Israel – including Birthright Israel which has brought 222,000 participants to Israel over ten years,⁴² MASA⁴³ and the members of the Israel on Campus Coalition.⁴⁴

Promoting Meaningful Jewish Engagement on Campus

A centerpiece in the Hillel: The Foundation for Jewish Life on Campus's effort to emphasize the quality of Jewish experience on campus are the Senior Jewish Educator and Campus Entrepreneur initiatives.

Senior Jewish Educators (SJE), full-time professional Jewish educators, are currently (2009/10 academic year) placed on ten college campuses in the United States. The role of the SJE is to create opportunities for intensive Jewish learning on campus and within that role to work with the Campus Entrepreneurs Initiative (CEI), which utilizes part-time student interns to develop relationships with peers and introduce them to Jewish experiences. In 2008-09, SJE's worked on five campuses. CEI interns were located on a total of 17 campuses, including the five SJE campuses. In 2008, the SJE and CEI initiatives together reached an estimated 8,000 Jewish students on American college campuses. Of these, about 2/3, or over 5,000 come from moderate or weak Jewish backgrounds.*

*Steven M. Cohen, Ezra Kopelowitz, Jack Ukeles, Minna Wolf. 2009. "Assessing the Impact of Senior Jewish Educators and Campus Entrepreneurs Initiative Interns on Jewish College Students: Year One Report 2008-2009."

Hillel: The Foundation for Jewish Life on Campus is the largest provider of Jewish Peoplehood opportunities on campus with a presence on 513 campuses in the United States and Canada,⁴⁵ with affiliates in Latin America, the Former Soviet Union, Israel, the United Kingdom and Australia.⁴⁶ The organization provides a pluralistic framework for Jewish involvement. Since 2006 Hillel has begun to actively promote a more intensive Jewish educational strategy which focuses on the "meaningful Jewish engagement" of students with the goal of inspiring "an enduring commitment to Jewish life." Hillel's new educational emphasis stands in contrast to a previous focus on the "largest possible number of Jewish participants 'doing Jewish'," but without using the quality of that Jewish experience as a basis for determining success (see case study on this page).

Jewish educational opportunities for young adults are also expanding in Israel. Hillel has expanded its Israel presence from one

⁴¹ For a general overview of Jewish engagement opportunities on American campuses see: Amy Sales and Len Saxe (2006) "Particularism in the University: Realities and Opportunities for Jewish Life on Campus" Report commissioned by the Avi Chai Foundation. Maurice and Marilyn Cohen Center for Jewish Studies, Brandeis University.

⁴² [http://dcoll.brandeis.edu/bitstream/handle/10192/22960/JewishLifeonCampusB%20\(4\).pdf?sequence=1](http://dcoll.brandeis.edu/bitstream/handle/10192/22960/JewishLifeonCampusB%20(4).pdf?sequence=1)

⁴³ <http://www.birtherightisrael.com>. See Birthright research conducted by the Cohen Center at Brandeis University.

⁴⁴ <http://www.masaisrael.org/masa/english/>

⁴⁵ <http://www.israelcc.org/members>

⁴⁶ http://www.hillel.org/about/facts/who_what/default

⁴⁶ <http://www.hillel.org/about/global/default>

to eight campuses in the past decades and there is a growth of a new type of organization - pre-military leadership academies - which cater to highly motivated youth from across the social spectrum with a focus on Jewish leadership for Israeli society. The Avi Chai Foundation reports funding 18 such programs in 2009 with a combined total of 740 students.⁴⁷ Large numbers of Israeli soldiers are participating for approximately five of the ten day Birthright trips in organized mifgashim (see more below), with 4000 participating in the Summer of 2007 alone.⁴⁸ The Jewish Agency shlichut (emissary) programs for summer camp and Jewish community shlichim has since the early 2000s included a strong Peoplehood education component aimed at the shlichim themselves. 1700 young Israeli adults participate in the summer camp program each year. There also appears to be a growing focus on pluralistic Jewish engagement opportunities for adults in general and young adults in particular in Europe, although little documentation or research exists to enable an understanding of the implications for Jewish Peoplehood education.⁴⁹

Adult Education

Lisa Grant and Diane Schuster write that for most of the twentieth century, adult study was a low priority on the Jewish communal agenda that was more focused on rescue and resettlement of immigrants and refugees, supporting Israel, and other “civic” expressions of Jewish belonging. Starting in the 1980’s, attitudes have changed with a resulting growth and diversification of adult learning opportunities outside of the Orthodox world. Moreover, until the last decade very little communal conversation had taken place in the United States or elsewhere about the *purposes* of adult Jewish learning.

“When providers of such literacy-focused programs as the Florence Melton Adult Mini-Schools created their curricula, they emphasized that the learning was for its own sake rather than to promote specific behavioral changes or to advocate deeper involvement in the Jewish community. Such objectives might have been a tacit goal or part of a hidden curriculum in emerging adult Jewish learning programs, but they were not articulated publicly.”⁵⁰

As with other forms of education, adult education that is limited to the classroom and focused on intellectual enrichment without a focus on the broader life-involvement of the individual in Jewish community cannot qualify as Peoplehood education. As Grant and Schuster show only a limited subset of adult education programs have begun to broach these types of issues. An

⁴⁷ <http://www.avi-chai.org/bin/en635e.html?enPage=BlankPage&enDisplay=view&enDispWhat=Zone&enZone=ENAJL#17>

⁴⁸ See Theodore Sasson et. al. 2008. Encountering the Other, Finding Oneself: The Taglit-Birthright Israel Mifgash. Maurice and Marilyn Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies, Brandeis University.

<http://ir.brandeis.edu/bitstream/handle/10192/22986/mifgash.english.01.05.09web.pdf?sequence=34>

⁴⁹ See: Compass: Directions in European Jewish Life. 2009. The Westbury Group. <http://www.compass europe.org/>

⁵⁰ Lisa Grant and Diane Tickton Schuster. (forthcoming) “The Landscape of Adult Jewish Learning,” in Miller, H., Grant, L. and Pomson, A. (eds) *The International Handbook of Jewish Education*, Springer, The Netherlands.

outstanding case of a Peoplehood education for adults is the worldwide proliferation of Limmud, which is a network of volunteer driven organizations. Each Limmud sponsors week-long learning festivals and other forms of community based learning events in a particular country or city.⁵¹ The first Limmud was founded in England in 1980 and additional Limmud organizations have now spread to 26 city and/or national frameworks organized in a network under the umbrella of Limmud International.⁵² The Peoplehood characteristics of Limmud are elaborated on in the case study on the previous page.

Another type of learning experience, along the lines of Limmud, which might have Peoplehood educational qualities are immersive learning programs, which take their participants out of everyday life and immerse them in Jewish learning for a period of time. Grant and Schuster point to the growing popularity of Jewish retreat centers and travel programs with Jewish themes.⁵³ There is also been a growth of educationally oriented Israel trips for adults, especially those focused on in-service training for

Limmud United Kingdom

Location: London, England

Website: <http://www.limmud.org/>

Adult Jewish learning is normally organized by educators working for religious organizations or professional associations for their members. The learning occurs in small homogeneous groups of adults who participate in formal classes.

Limmud, founded in the United Kingdom, organizes an annual week-long “learning festival” each Winter with over 2000 participants who span the denominational and communal breadth of UK Jewry. Limmud also creates additional learning events throughout the United Kingdom each year and Limmud International has helped over 40 communities world-wide start similar learning festivals.

Limmud views its mission as empowering Jews to learn and enabling that learning to occur in an inclusive manner. Key organizing principles include:

- Limmud is a volunteer led organization – in the UK there are 700 volunteers, and only 3 professional staff. Professionals employed by Limmud work to recruit and empower volunteers who implement the learning events and manage the organization. All decision making bodies are made up of volunteers.
- There is no automatic deference to status based on wealth, fame or religious affiliation. All are invited to participate as teacher and learners.
- Leaders are encouraged to move on, take different and diverse roles, and offer their support and experience for younger leadership.
- There is a high tolerance for mishaps and inefficiencies in order to enable and encourage new volunteers to quickly move up the ranks and take positions of responsibility.

⁵¹ The one exception is Limmud FSU, which focuses on Russian speaking populations in different countries.

⁵² <http://www.limmudinternational.org/world.htm>, For research on one Limmud see: Annete Koren and Nicole Samuel. 2007. “Challenges of the Third Year: An evaluation of Limmud NY,” Maurice and Marilyn Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies, Brandeis University.

<http://dcoll.brandeis.edu/bitstream/handle/10192/22976/ACF2EAB.pdf?sequence=1>

⁵³ Forthcoming, *ibid*.

Chicagoland Jewish High School

Location: Chicago, United States

Website: <http://www.cjhs.org/>

At most Jewish schools, Jewish education remains confined to the classroom and ceremonies. At Chicagoland the goal is to prepare students “to live Judaism as responsible and involved citizens in the modern world.”

Chicagoland staff strives to create “a dogma free institution” by creating spaces for students with different Jewish identities to talk together. “The goal is for each kid can develop their own voice and gain the ability to participate in informed dialogue and collaborate with others in building a Jewish community.” A successful graduate will seek to be part of the larger Jewish community in college and adult life.

The school seeks to create a microcosm of the broader Jewish community where the students are able to develop social, leadership and ritual skills and knowledge for a Jewish life. Informal and formal education are designed to complement one another in order to generate a lived experience of being part of a larger global Jewish collective.

Informal education

Students are partners in building the school. Students initiate and run social action and community development initiatives. Israel education is a large part of the school’s culture, including a senior year Israel trip with extensive pre and post educational activity in school and partnership programming with the Kiryat Gat community in Israel.

Formal education

Jewish Studies are designed to encourage critical thinking which enables students to draw on skills and knowledge to pursue a Jewish life which is meaningful to them. Whether Talmud, Tanach, modern Jewish thought or contemporary Jewish society the goals is for students to ask “what does this mean for me.”

Jewish professionals.⁵⁴ However, there is little substantial research that would enable us to understand the extent to which these programs are built on Peoplehood principles.

PEOPLEHOOD CHECKLIST FOR EDUCATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

Jewish Peoplehood practices within the education sector is a subset that is represented in its most coherent and advanced state when an organization views Jewish learning as the engine for wider processes of Jewish belonging to local and global Jewish community.

Individual

A common theme among Peoplehood organizations is the rejection of the idea that Jewish learning is only “Ishma” – “learning for its own sake.” While increasing an individual’s desire to engage in Jewish learning is important, Peoplehood education also includes the following goals:

- ✓ Jewish learning is viewed as relevant for an individual’s social, family or professional life
- ✓ Beyond personal Jewish growth, Jewish learning imbues the ability and desire of an individual to seek out interaction with other Jews in contexts outside of the classroom

⁵⁴ Lisa D. Grant and Alex D. M. Pomson. 2003. “In-Service Training to Professional Development: Alternative Paradigms In Israel for Diaspora Educators,” Jewish Agency for Israel. Department of Jewish-Zionist Education. <http://www.bjpa.org/Publications/details.cfm?PublicationID=787>

- ✓ Jewish learning provides deep awareness of belonging to the Jewish People and motivates an individual to contribute to Jewish community and society as an agent of the Jewish People.

Community

Peoplehood education does not rest on a narrow relationship between teacher and student but occurs in the context of community.

- ✓ Peoplehood education is not a “discipline,” but is a core process for enabling dynamic and meaningful experience of living in a Jewish community
- ✓ Individuals are empowered to serve as communal leaders with an expanded understanding of themselves as representing the good of the broader Jewish community
- ✓ Peoplehood educators do not overly commit to a particular Jewish ideology. The goal is not to promulgate a particular Jewish way of life but rather to motivate the student to continue to pursue his or her personal Jewish journey in the context of Jewish community.

Organization

Jewish Peoplehood organizations predicate their success on providing educational frameworks that serve as a gateway into Jewish community and motivate individuals to intensify their life-long Jewish journeys.

- ✓ The organization puts resources into Jewish learning opportunities for their professionals. Life-long Jewish learning is vital for professionals and lay leaders to develop and maintain a vibrant Jewish vision of the organization.
- ✓ Success is predicated on:
 - Providing an enabling framework for intensive and meaningful Jewish experiences which occur in the company of Jews of different backgrounds
 - Nurturing a sense of commitment to other Jews locally and globally
 - Developing a normative sense of lived pluralistic Judaism, which might include a commitment to religious practice but goes beyond.
- ✓ Jewish learning is not limited to classrooms and acquisition of disciplinary based knowledge; rather, there is an explicit attempt to link Jewish learning to Jewish life through a mix of formal and informal educational techniques (see Chicagoland Jewish High School case study on previous page).

RELIGION

TWO GENERAL MODELS

The research found two models of religious organizations that engage in Peoplehood practices.

Model One: Denominational but

The first model includes religious organizations which are denominationally/movement aligned institutions. Organizations of this type show-cased in this paper are Ramah Wisconsin, Chicagoland Jewish High School (Schechter), the Conservative Yeshiva and Yeshivat Chovevei Torah.

These organizations have a strong conception of core practices which are not open to negotiation, which might include, among others, prayer which conforms to standard halachic practice and communal norms governed by halacha. However the goal of the organization is not to have participants in its programs conform to a given set of religious practices, but rather grapple with the meaning of Jewish life today and actively shape religious tradition to enable interaction of Judaism with the broader society in general and collaboration and contact with other Jews in particular.

Model Two: Communally orientated organizations

The second model includes communally oriented organizations, which are not religious institutions, but in which religious ritual or Jewish learning rooted in the religious tradition plays an important role. Organizations show-cased in this paper include the RAVSAK and Meitarim school networks, Hillel and the Jewish Community Project. These organizations will usually have a rabbi on staff and view religious practice and knowledge as central to the Jewish experience of their constituents. However, they usually do not mandate a particular form of religious practice. The organization will often sponsor multiple options for prayer services and Jewish religious learning which covers a broad swath of the denominational spectrum.

Model One: Movement Affiliated

Yeshivat Chovevei Torah is an example of a religious organizations, identifying as Orthodox *and* deeply committed to being part of an inclusive Jewish public sphere.

Motto: "Where Open Orthodoxy Begins"

We at Yeshivat Chovevei Torah Rabbinical School (YCT) believe that the future of Orthodoxy depends on our becoming a movement that expands outward non-dogmatically and cooperatively to encompass the needs of the larger Jewish community and the world. For this vision to succeed, we require a new breed of leaders - rabbis who are open, non-judgmental, knowledgeable, empathetic, and eager to transform Orthodoxy into a movement that meaningfully and respectfully interacts with all Jews, regardless of affiliation, commitment, or background.

<http://www.vctorah.org/content/blogcatego>

Model Two: Community Oriented

Meitarim Network for Jewish Democratic Education is an example of a community oriented organization in which religion is a central dimension of the organization's work.

Mission Statement

The purpose of Meitarim is to educate Jewish children in a religiously pluralistic, coeducational environment. Meitarim establishes frameworks for Jewish-democratic education throughout Israel in which students from different backgrounds learn together about their common Jewish heritage in a non-coercive environment. Children are taught values such as Jewish Peoplehood, tolerance, and humanism and receive an education where there is no contradiction between Judaism, pluralism, and democracy.

<http://www.Meitarim.org.il/english/content.asp?pageid=8>

HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

Major changes to the Jewish religious tradition are constantly occurring.

Growth of ideological right

In both Israel and the United States there has been a steady growth since World War II of a strident, fundamentalist Orthodoxy, which regards the open society with suspicion and religious innovation with distrust.⁵⁵

Growth and then decline of Jewish ideological left wing

In both Israel and the United States strong expression of humanitarian or socialist Jewish movements flourished prior to World War II, but by the end of the 20th century were all but wiped out. This includes the anti-Zionism of classic Reform Judaism and the secularist and anti-religious Jewish labor and socialist movements in both the United and Israel.⁵⁶

The gradual attempt to systematize and institutionalize a moderate approach to the Jewish tradition

Middle of the road Judaism, represented by the Religious Zionist movement in Israel and the Conservative Movement and strands of moderate Orthodoxy in the United States from the late 19th century onwards have developed an approach to religious tradition which endorses

⁵⁵ Samuel C. Heilman. 2006. *Sliding to the Right: The Contest for the Future of American Jewish Orthodoxy*, University of California Press. Ezra Kopelowitz. 2001. "Varieties of Religious Politics and their Implications for Israel's Ethnic Democracy," *Israel Studies*, Fall edition. Menachem Friedman, (1993) "The Market Model and Religious Radicalism," in *Jewish Fundamentalism in Comparative Perspective*, ed. Laurence J. Silberstein, New York: 1993. Charles S. Liebman (1983) "Extremism as a Religious Norm," *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 22.

⁵⁶ S.N. Eisenstadt (1992) *Jewish Civilization: The Jewish Historical Experience in a Comparative Perspective*. Albany: State University of New York Press.

integration into society and full citizenship as a positive Jewish value and vital for Jewish survival in the modern world.

As with the growth of the ideological right wing, so have religious moderates begun to increasingly invest in systematizing and clarifying their approach to the open society. Unlike the religious right, the goal has been to embrace secular society, by developing appropriate knowledge, skills and institutional frameworks which make possible religiously informed Jewish life and integration into contemporary society. Some of these processes are in reaction to the strengthening of the religious right, but others are part of an ongoing process internal to religious moderates that are playing out over the long term.⁵⁷

Religious organizations which engage in Peoplehood practices started surfacing in the 1980s. These are organizations that are most advanced in creating a systematic theological approach, replete with accompanying community building, educational, religious and other organizational practices. In both Israel and the United States, and to a lesser extent elsewhere, there has been a marked growth in these “middle of the road” approaches to the Jewish religious tradition. Among the many phenomena are:

- Reform Judaism’s gradual embrace of more particularistic Jewish aspects of religious tradition – including encouraging observance of Kashrut, a relatively more traditional liturgy and a more enthusiastic embrace of Israel as a core pillar of Jewish belonging.⁵⁸
- The Conservative Movement’s systematization of a “traditional-egalitarian” approach to the Jewish tradition and religious law.⁵⁹

Religion is integral to Jewish community, but Jewish community cannot be reduced to religion

Rabbi Dr. Donniel Hartman
President of the Shalom Hartman Institute

*Excerpt from speech given at November 2009 quadrennial conference of World Confederation of Jewish Community Centers.

“Jewish community is not about the identity of its members. One cannot be a Jew outside of community. Community is the place where Jews become Jewish. A community which learns together engages with one another, creates a shared space to be a Jew.”

“How do we do Jewish community when there is no shared Judaism? The answer is that if we do not share how we live as Jews, then engagement with Judaism is the way forward. We don’t want to build a collective life on the hatred of others. The essence of our agenda is to build community on a positive foundation. To be a Jew is to aspire to greatness. To be a Jew is to set standards to enable intensive and meaningful engagement with the Jewish tradition.”

⁵⁷ Ezra Kopelowitz. (2001) "Who Has the Right to Change Tradition? Changing Conceptions of Religious Authority and their Consequences for the Jewish People," *Studies in Contemporary Jewry* 17, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001

⁵⁸ Marc Lee Raphael (2001) “The emergence and development of tradition in reform Jewish worship, 1970–1999,” in *Jewish History* 15, pp. 119-130.



Rabbi Avraham Weiss, Founder and President of Yeshivat Chovevei Torah

*Excerpts from Avraham Weiss. 1997. "Open Orthodoxy! A Modern Orthodox Rabbis Creed," *Judaism. Fall. 46: 4. Pp. 409-421.*

Judaism as journey not destination

"For the Orthodox Right, *da'at Torah* means means that decisions made by rabbis close off all discussion; in Modern Orthodoxy on the other hand, it sets the foundation from which discussion ensues (p. 412)."

"For the Orthodox right, the goal of outreach is to convince those being reached to become fully observant members of the Orthodox right. For Modern Orthodoxy the goal is not only the observance of ritual, but the stirring of Jewish consciousness, the lighting of a spiritual fire, allowing those touched to chart their own direction. Inherent in this approach is the fundamental element of process. Even if one chooses to remain less observant, he or she is fully embraced by the Modern Orthodox community.

Inclusive Judaism

"Modern Orthodoxy is open to secular studies and views other than those of their rabbis; open to non-Jews and less observant Jews; open to the state of Israel as having religious meaning; open to increased women's participation; open to contact with the Conservative, Reform and Reconstructionist movements; and open to public protest as a means to helping our people. It is for this reason that I believe that the term which best describes this vision of Orthodoxy, is 'Open Orthodox' (p. 417-18)."

- The realization by moderate Orthodox Jews of the need to separate out from sectarian Orthodoxy and develop an independent spiritual leadership and supporting institutions. These include, among others, the "Open Orthodox" movement in the United States and the Tzohar rabbinical movement in Israel.⁶⁰
- The growth of "emergent spiritual communities" in both Israel and the United States, many of which explicitly fashion themselves as pluralistic Jewish communities.⁶¹

⁵⁹Kopelowitz (2001) *ibid.*

⁶⁰ Chaim I. Waxman (2004) *American Modern Orthodox: Confronting Cultural Challenges, The Edah Journal 4:1, pp 2-13.* Yair Sheleg. 2000. *The New Religious Jews: A contemporary look at religious society in Israel.* Tel Aviv: Keter. [Hebrew]

⁶¹ The Synagogue 3000 website lists 23 American communities at <http://www.synagogue3000.org/working-group-emergent-sacred-communities-0>. The Israeli coalition of pluralistic Btei Midrash lists 21 member organizations at

- The growth of a non-Orthodox Jewish spiritual leadership in Israel; including, the institutionalization of Reform and Conservative Movements in Israel and the growth of secular centers of higher Jewish learning. The graduates of these centers are now bringing new forms of Jewish learning to youth movements, non-Orthodox prayer communities and schools which are dedicated to activity working with the religious tradition in a manner that enables a rich Jewish life in a multi-cultural and democratic context.

PEOPLEHOOD CHECKLIST FOR RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATIONS

Theological underpinnings

The following is a common theological agenda that emerges out of the interviews and the authors' observations of the field. While there are substantial variations, taken at a general level these theological points are commonly held by the people interviewed at the religious and community organizations.

- ✓ Opting into Covenant

Jewish identity today is complex. Jews move in and out of multiple worlds and need to view the religious tradition as meaningful and relevant in order to choose to stay within the Jewish world.

- ✓ No taken for granted Judaism

Given the diversity of Jewish life experiences there is no shared, common, taken for granted Judaism. Each Jew enters the Jewish tradition at the point in which he or she finds relevance and meaning.

- ✓ Judaism as journey, not destination

The religious mission is to provide meaningful opportunities to encounter the Jewish tradition, so that individual will opt-in to the covenant with God and embrace the

WELCOME TO CAMP RAMAH!

Camp Ramah is 150 acres of magical space, tucked away in the heart of Wisconsin's Northwoods. Within this space, campers and staff from throughout the Midwest and Israel unite each summer to form a very special Jewish community. Together, they experience the joy of overnight camping while leading vibrant Jewish lives. For campers, Ramah is a second home. It's also a place to learn new skills, gain independence, make lifetime friendships and become totally at ease as Jews.

<http://midreshet.org.il/default.aspx>. Also see Eli Kaufer (2005) Attracting Young People to Jewish Life: Lessons Learned from Kehilat Hadar, in *Jewish Education News, Spring edition* available at: <http://www.caje.org/learn/spring05/kaunfer.pdf> and Steven M. Cohen and Ari Y. Kelman (2007) "The Continuity of Discontinuity," How Young Jews Are Connecting, Creating, and Organizing Their Own Jewish Lives. Report commissioned by the Andrea and Charles Bronfman Philanthropies, available at: <http://www.bjpa.org/Publications/details.cfm?PublicationID=327>

resources that the Jewish religious tradition has to offer.

Mission, branding, image

- ✓ Core branding and image provides a message that contemporary society is a positive force and religious Judaism has an important contribution to make.
- ✓ Strong message of inclusiveness regarding interactions with other types of Jews
- ✓ For movement affiliated organizations, affiliation is secondary or downplayed within the overall message

Community

- ✓ Religion is an integral part of Jewish community, but Jewish community cannot be reduced to religion

The Jewish Community Project seeks collaboration with local synagogues and cultural institutions for the purpose of celebrating religious Jewish holidays.

Welcome to JCP Downtown!

JCP: Explore, Learn, Celebrate! Our mission is to meet the needs of the Jewish community in Lower Manhattan through our **Early Childhood Center, Hebrew School Project, Classes for Adults, Holiday celebrations, and community wide events.** Visit us @ **146 Duane Street** or call 212-334-3522.

Upcoming at JCP

HANUKKAH WITH CHILDREN'S MUSEUM OF ART
Sunday, Dec 6, 10am – 12pm at CMA in Soho for children 3-9. [Learn more.](#)

JCP'S DOWNTOWN HANUKKAH BASH
Sunday, Dec 13, 11am-1:30pm at PS 234. [Learn more.](#)

PRESCHOOL AND BRIDGE PROGRAM ADMISSIONS
Call the school office (212-334-3533) to learn about the admissions process and to reserve an info session spot.

Program Blogs and Darren's Blog

NOVEMBER 19TH, 2009
WHO IS A JEW? WHAT DO YOU THINK?
You may have been following the story in London about a student who wants to attend a Jewish school in London. The New York Times ran an article about it last week that I think important to read. It speaks to the question of Jewish as race, religion, culture, ethnicity. Read the story.

- ✓ Religion provides an important source of knowledge, skills and ritual which enable Jews to interact with one another as Jews in the context of community

Collaboration as a core practice

Success is predicated on collaboration with other organizations where possible

- ✓ Community wide events around religious holidays
- ✓ Seminars, formal discussions with representatives of different religious organizations

Religious Education

- ✓ A successful religious education provides needed knowledge, skills and motivation to pursue a personal Jewish journey with other Jews with the religious tradition as a central dimension of that journey.

- ✓ Religious education = participation in compelling Jewish communal experiences
- ✓ Jewish knowledge and practice is perceived as a resource for “living a rich human life,” rather than “Judaism as a prescribed way of life.”

- ✓ Educators and rabbis facilitating discussion and conversation, rather than giving sermons and lectures.

The Conservative Yeshiva (CY)
Project of the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism

Location: Jerusalem, Israel

Website: <http://www.uscj.org.il>

Learning in Judaism is a lifelong process, and the learning of traditional Jewish texts requires skills of language and methodology. The goal of the CY is to provide students with the skills for such learning and the desire to use them for life. The CY teaches Jews of all backgrounds the skills for studying Jewish texts in a supportive Jewish community. Our goal is to give students the ability and the desire to continue Jewish learning and practice throughout their lives.

<http://www.uscj.org.il/yeshiva/whois.php>

Excerpts from interview with Rabbi Gail Diamond, Associate Director of the Conservative Yeshiva

“CY takes motivated people and increases their motivation for a life time of Jewish learning and observance by teaching two types of skills: 1) Text learning skills: Hebrew, an understanding of how texts work and how to access rabbinic text, dictionary skills and skills you need for decoding Jewish texts; 2) Ritual skills – classes and workshops on liturgy and daily egalitarian traditional minyan where people can practice leadership in the service.

... Halacha is part of a person’s Jewish journey. We approach the topic from the perspective of ‘my relationship to halacha.’ For beginners it is about my connection, for the advanced students there are opportunities to dive into deeper issues.”

COMMUNITY

This section focuses on organizations whose primary goal is to enable Jewish community. While they may include within their purview religious or educational work, these are only one aspect of the wide variety of community building services, for the entire age spectrum, which these organizations provide. To judge the success of a community organization, requires going beyond the results of any particular area of their work, such as religion or education, and looking at the broader impact on development of Jewish community.

HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

Until the most recent period of Jewish history the discussion of “Jewish community” and organizations who aim to develop Jewish community was very different in Israel and other countries.

In the Diaspora, Jewish communal institutions aim to create the infrastructure for Jews to maintain social interaction with one another, as well as to provide for the welfare, educational and in some cases religious needs of the community. In some countries these organizations are country wide, such as the Board of Deputies in some of the British Commonwealth countries or its equivalent in other European countries, or focused on a particular region, such as the Federations in the United States and Canada. The latter are represented by the Jewish Federations of North America, which includes 157 Jewish Federations and 400 Network communities.⁶² In addition, in the United States the Federations have also over the course of the 20th century gone beyond the narrow needs of their local community and also joined together to support national and international Jewish concerns.⁶³

In addition, there are Jewish Community Centers, which focus on providing welfare, leisure, educational and other community oriented services to Jews in a particular city or neighborhood. The World Confederation of Jewish Community Centers counts 1,100 worldwide: 500 in Israel, 300 in North America, 180 in the Former Soviet Union, 70 in Latin America, 50 in Europe and one in Bombay, India.⁶⁴ The model for the contemporary Jewish Community Center took shape in North America after World War II with the suburbanization process and the onset of what we are calling here, the affiliation period.⁶⁵

⁶² <http://www.jewishfederations.org/section.aspx?id=31>

⁶³ Donald Feldstein 1995/6. “The Jewish Federations: The First Hundred Years,” *Journal of Jewish Communal Service*, Fall/Winter.

⁶⁴ <http://www.wcjcc.org/AboutUs.aspx>

⁶⁵ For an overview of the changing nature of Jewish communal organization in the United States see Daniel Elazar (1995) *Community and Polity: The Organizational Dynamics of American Jewry*. Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society.

International Cultural and Community Center (ICCY)

Location: Jerusalem, Israel

Website: <http://www.m-tarbut.co.il/>

Founded in 2001, the ICCY is one of a number of Israel Community Centers who are pioneers in the field of Jewish community building in Israel.

Excerpts from interview with Shaikhe El Ami, ICCY Director

“At the heart of our community building activity is the assumption that people want to volunteer, they want to influence their community and environment and we want to enable them to express this need. ... Our success is measured by numbers of volunteers and quality of leadership.

... We are committed to supporting and developing the pluralistic nature of public life in Jerusalem in general and on Jewish issues in particular. On Jewish matters ICCY works in three areas:

1. Partnerships

... Through the Partnership 2000 framework we work with JCCs in Westchester and Manhattan, which includes teacher to teacher groups and leadership development. This teacher to teacher project enables our JCCs to work with local schools on Jewish matters. The JCC in Westchester had never spoken with schools, now they are in an active collaboration. We have also strengthened our existing connection with local schools, both religious and non-religious, which has become a more Jewish relationship.

2. Big events and shaping a pluralistic public space in Jerusalem

... We have a role to play in creating a Jewish public environment in Jerusalem that is shared by all Jewish groups and contributes to the Jewish richness of Jerusalem. ICCY sponsors six large events over the course of the Jewish calendar year in each of which thousands of people participate in street festivals and learning. For example, on Pesach we have events in local parks. The events bring a variety of Jewish leaders – rabbis and intellectuals, together along with a variety of programming aimed at families and different age groups.

3. Jewish cultural programming

... We sponsor events connected to Jewish holidays and Shabbat aimed at the entire spectrum of the Jewish community.”

Newfound prosperity propelled many Jews to the suburbs in the nineteen fifties and sixties. With more leisure time and disposable income, Jews sought recreational opportunities and other new pursuits. JCCs built large, modern facilities to serve the suburban populations. A host of new offerings included day camps, teen travel camps, fine art and performing arts, nursery schools, athletics and sports, services to the aged, and informal education. Additionally, other organizations began to be housed within JCC walls.⁶⁶

Prior to the 1970s, the “Jewishness” of Jewish community enabled by Federations and Jewish Community Centers was not a primary concern. The focus was settlement of immigrants and then newcomers to suburbia. For Federations:

.... This attitude began to change dramatically after 1967. The year 1969 marked the student "rebellion" at the CJF's [now the Jewish Federations of North America] General Assembly in Boston, where student activists demanded that federations support Jewish education more directly and more fully. This set off a chain of small and large changes from providing kosher food at General Assembly functions to making direct support of Jewish education the largest single component in local allocations in the federations of North America, now [1995] about 25% of

⁶⁶ http://www.jcca.org/about_us.html

*federation local allocations.*⁶⁷

In this same period, the Jewish Community Centers' also started to consciously become concerned with the Jewishness of their enterprise. The Jewish Community Center Association sponsored the COMJEE Task Force on Reinforcing the Effectiveness of Jewish Education in JCCs convened in 1982 and then again 10 years later.⁶⁸ Out of that process came the following statement which represents one of the earliest explicit statements of a Jewish Peoplehood mission.

*The JCC believes that Jewish peoplehood (Klal Yisrael) is a basic Jewish value. Jewish peoplehood refers to a sense of connection with and pride in the Jewish people, as well as the performance of deeds which support Jews throughout the world. Jewish peoplehood encompasses a feeling of alignment with the Jewish people - past, present and future. Consequently, the Center movement is committed to being a comfortable and receptive meeting ground for a broad panorama of Jews and Jewish perspectives. JCCs are places for all Jews; their doors are open to Jews of all persuasions and they were created to meet the needs of all Jews. In that sense the JCC might well be regarded as a contemporary "Jewish neighborhood." There are not separate JCCs for Orthodox, Conservative, Reform, Secular, Zionist, Non-Zionist Jews. There is one JCC which was created to serve all Jews. Indeed, the JCC is one of the few places in the community where Jews of different beliefs can meet together and learn about each other by being with each other. It is a place which focuses on what Jews have in common while respecting what differs between them.*⁶⁹

Vision statement of Jewish Community Center of Greater Baltimore

'A community that is rich in Jewish life, culture and opportunities for learning is created and maintained by individuals who strongly identify as Jews and value their community; therefore, the community is strengthened every time a child or adult moves farther along his or her journey of Jewish identity. This strengthened Jewish community then provides a better medium for the individual journeys of others.'

From: Creating a New Vision for the Jewish Community Center. Jewish Community Center of Greater Baltimore and Jewish Community Center Association. 2000.

The concept of organizations which build "Jewish community" is recent in Israel, coming in with what we called above, the Peoplehood phase of modern Jewish history. Through the creation of the State of Israel community oriented institutions were provided by the socio-political movements. Each movement provided educational, cultural and economic institutions many of which filled the functions associated with everyday community. As the movements weakened so new institutions are taking their place. These include:

⁶⁷ Feldstein. Ibid., p. 9.

⁶⁸ Barry Chazan and Mark Charendoff (eds) (1994) Jewish Education and the Jewish Community Center. JCC Association.

⁶⁹ Check citation Ibid, P. 14

The Jewish Community Project (JCP)

Location: Downtown Manhattan, New York City. United States

Website: <http://icpdowntown.org>

JCP is an example of an organization which has stopped using “number of members” to determining success. The organization does not charge membership dues, meaning that the unit for measuring success cannot be “membership,” but rather becomes “participation.”

JCP measures success in terms of number of individuals who are pursuing their personal Jewish journeys and participate in neighborhood Jewish community through the JCP framework.

JCP creates multiple access points to Jewish community, enabling people to become involved in areas that interest them by way of children and adult educational, cultural and religious programming. After initial participation in an event or program, JCP staff and volunteers attempt to engage participants and draw them into more intensive participation in other programming and volunteer opportunities.

In order to enable participation, JCP does not charge membership dues; but, rather uses a combination of market driven pricing, with philanthropy covering services deemed vital for success of the Jewish mission of the institution, but which require a subsidy in order to succeed.

Where feasible, programs are run in collaboration with other neighborhood organizations in order to promote the idea of neighborhood Jewish community.

- Community Centers

The Israel Association of Community Centers (IACC) was founded in 1969 and today numbers over 180 community centers (40 in the non-Jewish sector), with 816 branches, and more than 400 community schools throughout Israel.⁷⁰ The IACC is by mission a civil, and not a Jewish organization, seeking to serve all population groups in Israel, in an egalitarian fashion and until recently did not have a particularly Jewish focus in any of its activities. IACC created the Department for Jewish Renewal in 2003, which sponsors a wide range of activities aimed at raising resources and training Community Center personal to run events around the Jewish holidays for non-religious population and raising the overall level of Jewish education at the community centers.⁷¹

- Beit Midrash movement and emergent Jewish communities

The historical overview in the religion section above describes the growth of pluralistic learning centers in Israel, many of which also include Jewish communal activity (see footnote 61).

- Schools around which pluralistic Jewish community grow

The new Meitarim Network of pluralistic Jewish schools (see discussion on pg. 19) view development of Jewish community around the school as central to educational mission and success.

⁷⁰ <http://www.matnasim.org.il/Index.asp?CategoryID=280&ArticleID=441>

⁷¹ <http://www.matnasim.org.il/Index.asp?ArticleID=3992&CategoryID=1256&Page=1>

PEOPLEHOOD CHECKLIST FOR
COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS

**Jewish community building as
central goal**

- ✓ Success is measured by intensity of meaningful involvement in community and is not focused on number of members.

Most Jewish Community Centers and Synagogues built in the affiliation era, pursue an organizational development strategy which focuses on increasing membership. The more members, the more successful the organization, at least in terms of its ability to generate revenue needed to sustain programming. If members are actually involved in the life of the community is for many membership organizations a secondary or competing goal vis-à-vis the need to maintain a large membership base.⁷²

Many of the organizations showcased in this research project are creating the means for measuring success based on the extent of “meaningful engagement” in Jewish life attained by their constituents, rather than number of members. See the JCP case study on previous page for one example.

UJA Federation of Greater Toronto

Location: Toronto, Canada

Website: <http://www.jewishtoronto.com>

UJA Federation of Greater Toronto provides an example of a Federation working to integrate key services in order to pursue a holistic strategy for Jewish community building.

Integration

An area in which the integration strategy is most apparent is work by the Federation to integrate relations with Israel and the global Jewish world into the Federation’s work; including:

- Constant encouragement of lay and professional leaders to consider their organization’s place in the larger Jewish world and relationship to Israel
- Integration of an Israeli emissary (*shaliach*) as a member of Federation’s senior management team
- Extensive use of young Israeli emissaries as agents for drawing in younger populations at community institutions
- Partnering program with Eilat to bring about transformation in both communities
- Israel missions with the goal of enriching Toronto’s Jewish community
- Israel events as bridging opportunities between veteran, Russian and Israeli immigrant populations
- Incentivize social service agencies to bring in Peoplehood agenda through partnering projects and professional exchanges
- Leadership development for madrichim and camp counselors through participation in Jewish renaissance movement in Eastern Europe. Sharing best practices for Jewish community development.

Collaboration

Another key area is encouraging collaboration within the Toronto community.

- Bring people together for conversations across lines on big communal priorities.
- Bring together broad cross sections for professional and board development, for partnering and resource sharing.

⁷² Ezra Kopelowitz (2001) “The Logic of Numbers vs. The Logic of Souls: The Quandaries of the Contemporary Conservative Synagogue and their Implications for Jewish Communal Continuity,” *Conservative Judaism*, Fall.

The Kehillah Partnership

Location: Northern New Jersey, United States

Website: <http://www.kehillahpartnership.org/>

The Kehillah Partnership is a unique and pioneering initiative which seeks to forge collaborations between the Northern New Jersey Jewish Community Centers, UJA Federation of Northern New Jersey and area synagogues. The ultimate goal is to enhance outreach, engagement, community-building, educational programming, and affordability by sharing expertise and financial resources among organizations and institutions, and by offering Jewish individuals and families multiple and affordable entry points into the community.

The Partnership is currently in a “start-up phase” sponsored by the YJCC of Bergen County in cooperation with partner agencies, with the hope of creating a sustainable and autonomous enterprise. Work has focused to date in three primary areas:

Resource sharing for education

- The first pilot project started in 2007 has grown into collaboration between 10 area synagogues on Israel education.
- Cross-denominational programming focused on Israel education and the cultural arts integrates religious school classroom curricula with community-wide informal education programs, developed through collaboration among the synagogue educators and Kehillah mentors.
- Creation of an Internet educational platform to provide a shared curriculum and informal educational model to engage students, individuals and families in building Jewish community and increasing knowledge about Jewish life and Israel.

Expense reduction and affordability

- 36 different Jewish communal institutions in Bergen County are partnering in discounted purchase of utilities. The plan is to expand to group purchases of services and multi-tiered buying that will provide direct financial benefits to individual Kehillah members. A percentage of the savings will go towards funding the larger Kehillah Partnership.
- One-fee entry to community. In 2010 the Kehillah Partnership is piloting with one synagogue a program where families may elect to pay \$360 above their synagogue dues and have access to YJCC and Kehillah programming. The goal is to eventually institute an one-fee entry for the entire community. The vision is for families and individuals to have a Kehillah passport that provides entrance at synagogues, JCCs and all communal programs.

Strengthening Connections and Outreach

- By introducing community-wide programming around PJ Library, the Kehillah has launched a major outreach effort to attract and engage the unaffiliated.
- All Kehillah programs now in development, for various age cohorts, focus on developing and strengthening connections between community members with different affiliations and between individuals and communal institutions.

Integrated services to build community

Jewish Community Centers, Federations or other forms of regional or national Jewish organizations often focus on delivering services to their constituents, but do not go beyond particular services to integrate them into a holistic Jewish community building strategy, which includes connection to the global Jewish community. The UJA Federation of Greater Toronto’s case study on the previous page provides an example of integration using its partnership program with Israel and other Jewish world programming.

- ✓ An emphasis is placed on not providing discreet services that do not complement the greater goal of Jewish community building. For example, welfare services can activate volunteers and the “clients” themselves can become active community building agents (see discussion starting on page 47).
- ✓ Services are aimed at empowering individuals to participate in and contribute to Jewish community. For example, instead of finding volunteers for particular programs and stopping there, volunteers are treated as Jewish leaders. Volunteers participate in leadership development, Jewish learning and enrichment in order to empower them to serve the greater good of the local Jewish community and Jewish world and encourage greater long-term participation.
- ✓ Particular services and programs are run by volunteers or interns who themselves sit in key networks in the community. Professionals support the volunteers, providing organizational support, leadership training and Jewish enrichment. The services and programs become a means for reaching into existing social networks or creating new networks and activating them as Jewish communities.
- ✓ Pre and post program activity is critical if greater benefit for the community is to be gained from the investment in a particular program.

Collaboration

Collaboration between organizations enables greater material (resource sharing) and Jewish enrichment of Jewish communal life with an overall sense that there is a greater Jewish community both locally and globally. The ICCY, JCP, Toronto Federation and Kehillah Partnership case studies on the previous pages all provide examples of collaboration, including:

- ✓ Cooperative buying programs
- ✓ Cooperation for the purpose of running neighborhood festivals
- ✓ Sharing of personnel to enable programming that no one organization can afford
- ✓ Collaboration between community and religious organizations, in order to:
 - Enable constituents of the communal organization to engage in Jewish learning and celebrate holidays in non-denominational settings, or to become involved in the religious organization if there is interest.
 - Provide a gate way to constituents of religious organizations into broader communal involvement.
- ✓ Partnership programs designed to have community wide benefits for all partnering organizations.

VI. GENERAL BEST PRACTICES

The discussion on page 10 describes four core practices of organizations that successfully pursue Peoplehood practices, these are:

1. The explicit development of broad conceptions of Jewish community
2. The adoption of a pluralistic paradigm for enabling belonging to the Jewish People
3. The emphasis on Peoplehood as involving an individual's Jewish journey, rather than socialization into a particular Jewish life-style.
4. A framework for concrete commitment and action

For each of these four areas, Peoplehood organizations are working with an explicit commitment to nurture, what we coined above as "Peoplehood consciousness." These organizations are developing innovative pedagogies and community building strategies, which we can label as "Peoplehood by design." We now focus on a number of themes which appear as central to the Peoplehood practices and appear across the educational, religious or communal sectors covered in the preceding pages.

PROGRAMS DESIGNED TO BUILD PEOPLEHOOD CONSCIOUSNESS

The Birthright case study on page 11 focused us on the challenge of moving beyond social encounters between Jews to actually nurturing Peoplehood consciousness. Organizations that successfully promote Peoplehood consciousness often employ one of the following two programming strategies: 1) *mifgashim* and 2) leadership development. Both programming strategies provide a medium which, when done well, connects the educational experience with the person's larger life; and, create a collective context within which the individual's on-going Jewish journey can play out during the program and afterwards.

MIFGASHIM

Prior to the 1990s few trips by Diaspora Jews to Israel included educationally informed interactions with Israeli Jews. As the practice of the organized educational encounter took hold, it gained a push in 1994 with the creation of *Mifgashim* by the Charles R. Bronfman Foundation. *Mifgashim* was an organization that dedicated itself to furthering the idea of the inter-personal encounter between Israeli and Diaspora Jews as a basic educational tool. *Mifgashim* was closed as an independent organization in 2001, but the concept of the *Mifgashim* as an educational tool had by then taken firm root as a basic component in many of the educational venues that include Israeli and Diaspora Jews.

At this point, it is common place knowledge in the Jewish world that the successful *Mifgashim* provides extensive benefit for all participants in the area of Jewish identity and belonging.

When does a Mifgash produce Peoplehood consciousness?

Research shows that the success of the Mifgash depends on close collaboration between sponsoring organizations to the point where program participants fully integrate and become a single experiential group during the encounter. For this reason Birthright mandates that soldiers sit next to non-Israelis and not with one another. One summer camp director (see research cited in footnote 73) makes sure that Israeli counselor/shlichim do not eat, sleep, vacation and work separately from the American counselors, which often occurs at Jewish summer camps.

A Mifgash transcends the immediate social experience of the encounter and produces Peoplehood consciousness when three conditions are in place:

- ✓ **Social experience of Peoplehood**
An intense and enjoyable social interaction with Jews who are different from oneself
- ✓ **Facilitation of a continued Jewish journey**
The program is designed to encourage and enable continued social contact between participants; and,
- ✓ **Builds Peoplehood consciousness**
The program facilitates an intellectual understanding and emotional consciousness among participants that the benefit of the Mifgash is not only to them as an individual, but as a Jew who is a member of a broader Jewish collective. With the moment of realization also comes an initial commitment both to one's personal Jewish journey and to contributing to the community (local and global) within which that journey unfolds.

In most Mifgashim only the first of three conditions are met. An example in which all three conditions are met, at least in terms of program design, occurs in the more sophisticated of the school twinning programs. An example is the Boston-Haifa twinning program* which is overseen by Dept. of Jewish Peoplehood–Oren, of the Shdemot Center for Community Leadership at Oranim Academic College. The twinning program rests on creating concentric circles of engagement between communities. It begins by matching communities and schools. It expands outward to encompass interaction and dialogues between leadership, administrators and educators, and then to the students, parents and others involved in the educational life of the communities. The result is on-going contact between the school communities and a deep and lasting impact (in theory – no longitudinal research exists) on educators and policy makers.**

*Detailed in David Mittelberg (forthcoming), "Jewish Peoplehood Education," in H. Miller, L. Grant, L. and A. Pomson (eds) (2010 forthcoming). *The International Handbook of Jewish Education*, Springer, The Netherlands.

**See, Laura Shulman Brochstein in conjunction with Roberta Bell Klinger (2008) "Best Practices Handbook: Boston-Haifa School to School Connections," Boston: Combined Jewish Philanthropies.

Acceptance is to the point that the Israeli army now gives permission to approximately 4000 active soldiers each year, time off from service to travel with their Diaspora counterparts on Birthright buses as full participants for half of the overall trip (see footnote 48).

A core part of the Mifgash philosophy is that educational benefits accrue to both the Israeli and non-Israeli participants, and the broader communities in which they live, with an overall increase of Peoplehood consciousness for all involved parties. As such, the best of contemporary Mifgashim are going beyond their original focus on the Israel trip and are

Hillel utilizes Birthright for the purpose of building Peoplehood consciousness on campus

Among the operators of Birthright trips, Hillel provides a sophisticated approach to integrating the Peoplehood experience on the trip with pre and post programming which might go a long way towards promoting Peoplehood consciousness for participants. In the case of the Campus Entrepreneur Initiative (CEI) (see case study on page 21), student interns who participate in a year-long leadership development and Jewish learning program, travel on the Birthright trip along with senior Hillel staff as part of their internship. The CEI interns will often run social and educational events on campus before and after the trip, along with other engagement opportunities offered by Hillel professionals.

The combination of leadership development, with Jewish learning, is expected to empower the CEI intern to reach out to fellow Jewish students during the internship year, including during the Birthright trip, and then continue into a life of greater involvement in the Jewish community.

Hillel is utilizing the Birthright trip to make at two significant contributions towards promoting Peoplehood consciousness among students; once, for the larger Jewish leadership experience of the CEI interns, and once for the expansion of pre and post trip opportunities for students to build on the Birthright Peoplehood experience.

increasingly being organized with Israeli participants coming to Diaspora communities⁷³ and between Jews from countries other than Israel. Following this logic, the recently formed I-Center⁷⁴ views the Mifgash as the central strategy for Jewish education both in Israel and abroad; and, is focusing on training educational personnel to successfully utilize the Mifgash to generate broad benefits for participating communities. The school twinning programs are also examples where the mutual movement of Jews in both directions (Israel and Diaspora) is part of the program design.

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT AND NETWORK BUILDING

Several of the Peoplehood organizations show-cased in this paper tackle the experience/consciousness challenge raised in the above discussion of Taglit-Birthright Israel, through a focus on leadership development.

⁷³ For a similar argument see Mittelberg forthcoming, *Ibid.* For a focused case study of the Mifgash in the context of American Jewish summer camps see: Minna F. Wolf and Ezra Kopelowitz 2003. *Israeli Staff in American Jewish Summer Camps- The view of the camp director.* Jerusalem: Department of Jewish Zionist Education, The Jewish Agency for Israel. Available at: <http://www.bjpa.org/Publications/details.cfm?PublicationID=2898>. There is a relatively large literature on Mifgashim; see, for example: Wolf, Minna. F. 2007. *Negotiating the Boundary: Exploring Identities during Israel Experience Mifgashim.* The Hebrew University of Jerusalem (doctoral dissertation). Jackie Feldman and Neta Katz. 2002. *Three Mifgashim in 2001: How Youth Encounters Reflect Israelis and Diaspora Jews Ideological Position towards Each Other,* Jerusalem: Department of Jewish Zionist Education, The Jewish Agency for Israel. Available at: <http://www.bjpa.org/Publications/details.cfm?PublicationID=2917>. Ezra Kopelowitz. 2003. "Between Mifgash and Shlichut: Paradigms in Contemporary Zionist Education and the Question of the Ideological Relationship between Israel and the Diaspora." Jerusalem: Department of Jewish Zionist Education, The Jewish Agency for Israel. Available at: <http://www.bjpa.org/Publications/details.cfm?PublicationID=249>.

⁷⁴ <http://www.theicenter.org/>

The concept of “leadership development” denotes an expectation that a particular program is part of a strategy to impact the Jewish world. There is an expectation that participants leave the program motivated to continue their personal Jewish journey, with the knowledge and skills which will allow them to serve as change agents for the betterment of their Jewish organizations, communities and the Jewish People.

In the most sophisticated versions of leadership development:

✓ **Volunteer turns into an agent**

Welfare (social care), leisure, educational or other services provided by an organization are utilized to empower individuals to participate in and contribute to Jewish community. For example, instead of finding volunteers for particular programs, the organization views volunteers as a core resource and stake holders in the broader Jewish community. The particular program for which the person volunteers, is a gateway into broader communal involvement. Each volunteer is a potential Jewish leader. Volunteers participate in leadership development, Jewish learning and enrichment. The result is that volunteering becomes a point from which an individual pursuing their personal Jewish journey through volunteering is transformed into a conscious agent working on behalf the greater good of the local and global Jewish communities.

✓ **Community development**

Particular services and programs are run by volunteers or interns who themselves sit in key networks in the community. Professionals support the volunteers, providing organizational support, leadership training and Jewish enrichment. The services and programs become a means for reaching into existing social networks or creating new networks and activating them as Jewish communities.

There are at least two forms of leadership development programs which build Jewish Peoplehood consciousness:

1. Organizations which include leadership development as part of their broader educational or community development strategy

Organizations, which are as different from one another as Chovevei Torah Yeshiva, Chicagoland Jewish High School and Hillel offer opportunities for leadership development with Peoplehood goals. Leadership training is one element of the students’ larger multi-year relationship with the organization. The programs often combine 1) formal study of classic rabbinical or modern Jewish texts, with 2) learning about the Jewish community and 3) hands-on experience in the Jewish community through service learning. The combination of all three areas informs a holistic pedagogy which encourages participants to form a sharp sense of their personal

location in the Jewish world and the areas in which they want to contribute to the Jewish People.

2. Dedicated leadership development programs

In addition there are dedicated leadership development programs. Examples include, Wexner Heritage, Panim: The Institute for Jewish Leadership and Values and the Center for Leadership Initiatives in the United States, JDC's Metzudah year-long leadership program for young adults in the eastern Ukraine, the San Francisco Federation's Gvanim Leadership program in Israel and lay leadership programs within the Partnership 2000 framework. While the dedicated leadership program that does not integrate into a larger organization, the most sophisticated programs encourage interaction of participants and Jewish communities of which they are a part.

In Israel in particular, there has been a strong growth of these dedicated Jewish leadership programs. A recent survey showed 22 organizations, which run 43 programs. 69% of the programs were founded within the last 10 years. In total they claim 7239 alumni as of 2009.⁷⁵ All of these programs covered by the research are pluralistic in orientation and almost all include intensive Jewish study as part of the curriculum.

ENABLING ACCESS TO JEWISH COMMUNITY

Jewish community is a vital gateway into the Jewish People. In order to promote communal participation a Peoplehood organization will invest a great deal of planning and thought to creating a sustainable model for making community accessible.

Accessibility has at least two potential meanings.

1. Affordability

The ability to afford the economic cost of accessing Jewish community; and,

2. Ownership

Taking ownership means that an individual is accessing community in a deep sense. Not only does a person access community physically (i.e., he or she can afford the entrance ticket), but once present, the nature of involvement encourages ownership – that is responsibility for and commitment to Jewish communal life.

⁷⁵ Ezra Kopelowitz and Vered Sakal. 2009. "Building Jewish Leadership in Israel: A Preliminary Survey of the Field," Research commissioned by the UJA Federation of New York.

AFFORDABLE COMMUNITY

Organizations that depend on membership dues for their primary income became the dominant model for communal institutions in many Diaspora countries in the affiliation period. Many of the organizations covered in this research consciously do away with membership dues or lower them dramatically, devising other revenue models in order to enable a form of Jewish community which doesn't depend on high up-front payment by participants; but is nevertheless sustainable.

The business plan which girds the religious, educational or communal work of Peoplehood organizations will often include a combination of the following:

- **Market driven services** that constituents will pay for – for example early childhood education programs are expensive and people are willing to pay for them;
- **Fund-raising** to subsidize activities that are core to the organization's Jewish mission but for which people won't pay the full cost; and,
- **Resource sharing or group purchases** with other organizations or **outsourcing** of services which require high levels of expertise in order to lower costs.

DECENTRALIZATION OF AUTHORITY IN ORDER TO ENCOURAGE OWNERSHIP

To enable an individual to move past passive participation and intensify involvement in Jewish community, and through that involvement greater Peoplehood consciousness, requires the Jewish professional to relinquish authority. The role of the Peoplehood professional is to transfer responsibility and a sense of commitment to enriching their own Jewish lives and that of the larger community. Devolving authority, involves at least two processes:

1. Spreading responsibility

Cutting down on sermons and lectures in order to spread the responsibility for Jewish talk and discussion to all those present at a given activity. The Peoplehood professional listens at least as much as he talks in his or her interactions with constituents. The professional works to prepare people to effectively participate, by learning with them and assigning responsibility to run events, start conversations and help make Jewish conversation a part of everyday life.

2. Poor performance and a degree of disorder is a blessing, not a bother

Accessibility to Jewish community need not only be affordable, but also meaningful with the conditions that encourage individuals to intensify participation. For that to occur, individuals need to feel that organizations are responsive to their voices and needs. A core characteristic of responsiveness involves professionals devolving authority to laity to run key processes of communal life, with all the consequences for a "less than professional affair."

Accessible Jewish Community

In the following article, the author proposes a model for making community accessible to young Jews. We feel that the model applies to all generations and we have seen it applied by other Jewish organizations show cased in this report.

Excerpts from: “Attracting Young People to Jewish Life: Lessons Learned from Kehilat Hadar”

Author: Elie Kaunfer

*Full article available at: <http://www.caje.org/learn/spring05/kaunfer.pdf>

Many young people are interested in spirited and inspiring prayer

The backbone of Hadar is our prayer service, which has always attracted the most attendees. Although it is tempting to claim that prayer services don’t appeal to young people, it is more accurate to say that *existing* prayer services don’t appeal to young people. At Hadar, we strive for spirited prayer. This is often hard to define, but some aspects include:

- Traditional liturgy with varying and innovative melodies.
- The prayer leader in the middle of the congregation (as opposed to the front).
- Short (5-minute) *divrei Torah*
- No guilt: People come to services because they want to, not because they are pressured.
- A room that holds only the number of people who come; no cavernous sanctuary.
- A willingness to experience prayer as joyful and also as reverent.

Substantive educational programming builds community.

A major highlight of Hadar’s calendar is our annual Shavuot retreat in the Berkshires, where 300 people celebrate the holiday together. People come to learn with each other: 40 classes are offered during the first night, and most stay up all night learning with people they don’t know well. By the end of the holiday, serious friendships have formed, sparked by connections made at these classes. At our weekly Beit Midrash on the Torah portion, we match participants in one-on-one pairs for study. Our philosophy is: teach at a high level, and support beginners. This strategy has attracted a diverse crowd of learners: a third with day school high school background, a third without any formal Jewish education.

Certain types of authority are suitable to a community of young people

Young people may bristle against top-down authority, and do not necessarily identify with the hierarchical model of a rabbi running services from the *bimah*. Walking into Hadar on *Shabbat*, by contrast, it is not clear who organizes the services. Our service leaders are all lay people and we cycle through many different prayer leaders, rarely repeating throughout the year. Nonetheless, there is a clear authority structure at Hadar: Five *gabba'im* (organizers) run day-to-day operations, while a larger Leadership Team provides strategic direction. People like to know that someone is watching the clock, finding the *daveners*, running the logistics and steering the ship; a strong leadership helps enable efficient services and programming. Committees that are big and unwieldy are often frustrating and end up disappointing constituents. Our group of *gabba'im* has formed a culture of cooperation and consensus, providing a steady hand of leadership behind the scenes.

Prices are cheap

Young people are not prepared to spend hundreds of dollars on synagogue membership (especially without clear benefits). While some may bemoan young people’s aversion (or inability) to paying high dollar amounts, this is the reality. However, young people are not stingy. When people sign up for Hadar’s High Holidays services, we suggest a donation (\$125, or \$75 for students), but people can pay whatever they want, or nothing; no one is coerced or forced to “buy a seat.” The vast majority (88%) of people who signed up for High Holidays elected to donate to Hadar, with the average donation around \$90. In addition, our weekly *Beit Midrash* costs \$5 for an hour and a half. Low costs for classes allow us to gauge what the actual demand is, without concern that prices are too high.

Many educational and religious institutions that sponsor classes or hold prayer services and ceremonies place a high emphasis on order and decorum. Authority is centralized in the hands of a professional charged with maintaining order, decorum and a high level of aesthetic experience for those “attending” the event. The problem is that life is not theater. For Jewish collective experience to be meaningful and relevant it must enable people to live their lives through Jewish community. “Attendance” must become “participation.”

Integrating welfare services as platforms for Jewish community building

Jewish Care

Location: London, England

Website: <http://www.jewishcare.org>

Excerpts from speech by Neil Taylor, Director of Jewish Care, at the 8th Quadrennial Conference of the World Confederation of Jewish Community Centers, November 5, 2009

“If we accept the premise that Jewish Community Center’s should be at the forefront of community building and a driving force for change sitting at the heart of and responding to the needs of communities; if we acknowledge the thousands of people who live in our communities who could give as well as who could take, we have the opportunity to mobilize many people for the benefit of our communities and ensure their sustainability.

...I believe though there are two fundamental principles that are central to JCC’s adopting such an approach and their success is dependent on the degree to which they:

- 1) embrace the concept of volunteering and understand the potential impact on those that volunteer*
- 2) understand how adopting principles of mutuality can be enabling and empowering (and cost effective).*

.... In Jewish Care we have been on a journey that is yet to finish. We have reached the stage where we treat our work with older people in our community centers as community building – social care is the tool by which we engage people. It has been about shaping Day Centers into community centers where:

- 1) social welfare ‘clients’ are not treated as such*
- 2) traditional social welfare programming is indistinguishable from any programming that you would see in any standard JCC*
- 3) when you start talking in terms of social engagement being about creating communities, enabling people to live independently and to fulfil their aspirations, connecting and engaging people with their communities you are talking the language of JCCs.*

Peoplehood organizations encourage their constituents to engage in community by participating in Jewish life as it plays out in the life of the organization. For example, a person who leads the prayer service as part of their learning experience, or even an accomplished volunteer, will not daven at the same level as a professional Cantor; yet, that person is empowered to participate and lead, and bring his or her own character and personality to the prayer experience.

INTEGRATION

Peoplehood consciousness develops when individuals experience sustained contact with “the Jewish collective” in multiple places and times. Being Jewish is not isolated to a particular holiday or ceremony, but rather infuses the life experience.

Peoplehood organizations generate Peoplehood consciousness by utilizing important activities – whether formal or experiential, religious or secular – as platforms for continuing Jewish experience.

Integration of welfare and Jewish community building
Joint Distribution Committee
FSU (Former Soviet Union) Department

Excerpt of Weekly e-mail briefing (May 1, 2009) written by Osher Ostrin, Director of JDC's FSU Department

Our Yom Hashoah commemoration was held in the largest park in Dnepropetrovsk, adjacent to the city's university, at midday. There were scores of people strolling through the grounds, passing the gathering of the Jewish community at a small monument marking the site where 10,000 Jews were slaughtered in 1941. To the extent that "place" contributes to meaning, we were where we needed to be.

The ceremony was extremely moving in its simplicity. There were survivors present, not just Shoah survivors, but actually survivors of the mass slaughter at that site. The passersby stopped to inquire, and they were told. But the ceremony was very much an internal one for the community.

All this by way of background to what I personally found most moving and meaningful.

Six candles were lit, each by a survivor accompanied by a local Hillel student or a graduate of Metzudah [local JDC leadership development program]. The presence of both ends of the generational spectrum was powerful. But the 4th candle especially. The young part of the duo was Irina Zarchenko. 14 years old. She has serious developmental issues and is confined to a wheel chair. With tears streaming down her face, she was pushed up the small hill by her survivor grandfather. Together they lit the candle.

As a Jew, and as "an imperfect human specimen" (in Nazi terminology), 68 years ago Irina would have been a prime victim of the mass murder at that sight.

Today, she is an active participant in the Tikvah program for special needs children at the Dnepropetrovsk JCC. Her presence at the ceremony, and participation in it, was not singled out in any way. She was a participant in it like all of her peers who were present. She was treated with the same dignity as all of the others who lit candles. She is a young Jew, fully integrated into her Jewish community, which is committed to addressing her needs, through the various institutions that JDC was instrumental in setting up. The value placed on every individual by the Jewish community stood in stark contrast to the history of that place, and ultimately, gave that ceremony a meaning it might not have had anywhere else in the world at that moment. It was the "Jewish community of Dnepropetrovsk", a concept difficult to fathom a few short years ago, that made this event, through Irina's participation in it, so meaningful.

Excerpt from interview with Asher Ostrin

This story illustrates a few amazing outcomes of the Metzudah leadership program.*

- *Learning up the generations*
The ceremony was lead by young adults from the Metzudah program for older members of the community.
- *Jewish learning which is culturally relevant*
The ceremony touches the pulse of Jewish life. These young leaders are able to create a meaningful ceremony that draws on Jewish learning and is relevant to local Jewry.
- *The place of Irina in the ceremony is an example of the tendency of these young Jews to merge social activism and welfare with Jewish renewal.*

*On the Metzudah leadership program see: <http://arkow.wordpress.com/2008/12/11/metsudah/>

The central principle is that “Judaism” or “Jewish experience” cannot be compartmentalized and limited to a classroom, a trip or a ceremony without connection to other areas of the participants’ life at the particular institution or elsewhere.

Seemingly "secular" activities such as the provision of welfare services at a JCC or the study of math and science at a school become the basis for Jewish learning and community building. Or alternatively, Jewish activities such as an Israel trip or the study of rabbinic texts serve as vehicles for a larger agenda of education and community development.

In this section, we explore a sample of three areas where integration is occurring:

1. The use of welfare services by Jewish communal organizations to build Jewish community
2. Israel related activities as a platform for Jewish community development
3. Teaching of Judaism in a manner that serves a basis for broader involvement in Jewish life.

WELFARE SERVICES AS AN ENGINE FOR JEWISH COMMUNITY BUILDING

Many Jewish organizations offer welfare or social care services that do not integrate into the main Jewish identity or community building work of the organization in a clear way. A poignant example is found at Jewish Community Centers where welfare services are often a major income generator for the organization, with revenue coming from municipal, state, federal, federation and philanthropic sources. These services are rarely utilized to gird the “Jewish” basis of the Community Center, which often is highly subsidized and an income drain.

Integrating welfare and Jewish is a powerful combination for the Jewish Peoplehood mission of the Community Center and also results in a stable revenue stream for the organizations Jewish work. The case studies of work done by *Jewish Care* and the *Joint Distribution Committee* on the previous two pages illustrate how welfare and Jewish community development might integrate.

ISRAEL AS A RESOURCE FOR INDIVIDUAL GROWTH AND COMMUNITY BUILDING

As broached in the above discussion of mifgashim, a significant change is occurring in the use of the connection between Israeli and Diaspora Jews in the context of Jewish life, broadly defined. The core idea is to move away from the classic Zionist paradigm that saw Diaspora Jewry mobilized to support Israel; and, Israeli Jewry viewing Diaspora Jews as targets for aliya and philanthropic support.⁷⁶

While not necessarily replacing core elements of the classic Zionist paradigm, like philanthropic support for Israel and aliya, the Peoplehood phase of Israel-Diaspora relations stresses the mutual benefit that derives from interactions between Jews. In order to realize the benefits of the encounter between Israeli and Diaspora Jews, that encounter must be integrated into the life of the participating organizations and communities. Around this idea has grown a great deal of organizing activity.⁷⁷

The Israel trip as a medium for integrating Hebrew and Jewish Studies*

The Frankel Jewish Academy

Location: Detroit, USA

Website: <http://www.frankelja.org/>

The Frankel Jewish Academy in Detroit encourages Hebrew and Jewish studies teachers to work together to plan the school's Israel trip and to organize the Israel Independence day ceremony. Previously, the Hebrew teachers (i.e., the Israelis) were responsible for all planning that directly related to Israel. The result was a practical and conceptual divide between the Israeli teachers who came to represent "Israel" and Jewish studies teachers whose work represented the narrowly defined "Jewish" aspects of the school's educational work. By bringing the teachers to work together the hope is that Jewish studies and Israel education become seen as one. The school hopes in the future to bring secular studies (math, languages, science, art etc.) into the conversation.

* Informal conversation in 2007 with Rabbi Buckman former Head of the Frankel Jewish Academy. Also see an unpublished document written by Rabbi Buckman: "A Vision of Zionism at the Frankel Jewish Academy: An Analysis of Survey Data" (June 2007).

⁷⁶ Theodore Sasson (forthcoming 2010) "From Mass Mobilization to Direct Engagement: The Changing Relationship of American Jews to Israel," *Israel Studies*; and, Ezra Kopelowitz (2003) "Between Mifgash and Shlichut: Paradigms in Contemporary Zionist Education and the Question of the Ideological Relationship between Israel and the Diaspora." Jerusalem: Department of Jewish Zionist Education, The Jewish Agency.

⁷⁷ Efforts include a recent \$1,000,000 grant to establish iCenter—an Israel resource center—by the Schusterman Family and Jim Joseph Foundations. The Jim Joseph Foundation also supports an extensive Israel education program for day schools in the Bay Area. The Avi Chai Foundation is making extensive investments in high school Israel education. The Legacy Heritage Israel Engagement Grants aimed at congregations that want to pursue greater Israel engagement. The Jewish Agency's program, MAKOM - The Israel Engagement Network, works with 13 Federations and networks of local organizations in each community to encourage greater and more sophisticated forms of Israel engagement. There is also work being done in academia to further the field of Israel studies at the University level (Schusterman Center for Israel Studies, Brandeis University) and Israel Education in other contexts, such as Center for Israel Education at Emory University, <http://www.israeled.org/>, the Melton Centre at Hebrew University, <http://melton.huji.ac.il/eng/projects.php?cat=105>, including the recent International Conference on "The purpose and practice of Israel Education" <http://virtualemelton.huji.ac.il/course/view.php?id=8>, and the Mandel Institute and Melton Centre's, International Conference of Research in Jewish Education on Multiple Identities, <http://mandel.mli.org.il/MandelCMS/English/News/Multiple+Identities+Conference.htm>. A variation of the larger pattern

World Confederation of Jewish Community Centers The Tri-Center Project

Location: Jerusalem, Israel

Website: <http://www.wcicc.org/JCctoJCC.aspx>

Based in Jerusalem, The World Confederation of Jewish Community Centers (WCJCC) is the umbrella organization of more than 1,100 Jewish Community Centers (JCCs) worldwide. The Tri-Center project partners three JCCs, one in Israel, one in North America and a third with a JCC in another region of the world. The vision is that each JCC works to enable a connection between their local constituents to Jews in other lands and at the same time build the human resources and organizational support for Jewish Peoplehood related work.

The design of a successful partnership program considers a number of factors:

- **Circles of participants**

Each project is designed around three circles. First is the central circle of participants. A second circle around the core group consists of involved JCC staff and directors. In the outer circle are Board members of each JCC and parents who are involved, but in a more selective manner.

- **Mutuality and inclusion**

An essential part of the Partnership process is building trust and confidence from the primary stake-holders at each JCC and equal levels of participation from all partners.

- **Curriculum**

Three cross cutting modules which inform all stages of the Partnership program: 1) Building connections, 2) leadership training and 3) volunteer service.

In the context of organizations

In the context of organizations the logic of the mifgash is to use the Israel-Diaspora connection to integrate otherwise disparate areas of organizational life to produce a greater sense of collective belonging. The case study of the Frankel Jewish Academy above, provides an example. There are also documented examples of similar work being done in camps and congregations.⁷⁸

of Israel education or Israel engagement is "Israel advocacy." The Israel advocacy organizations focus on preparing young high school and college-age Jews to counter anti-Israel sentiment. Their work concentrates on imparting knowledge about Israel and advocacy skills. In the past ten years, the Israel advocacy field has grown tremendously, including the creation of an umbrella organization, Israel on Campus Coalition, which serves as an umbrella organization for 33 member organizations (<http://www.israelcc.org/>) working on and with North American campuses.

⁷⁸ Also see Minna Wolf and Ezra Kopelowitz (2003) "Israeli Staff in American Jewish Summer Camps: The view of the camp director." Department of Education, The Jewish Agency for Israel. Available at: <http://www.bjpa.org/Publications/details.cfm?PublicationID=2898> ; and, Lisa Grant and Ezra Kopelowitz (2009) Strengthening the connection of American Jews to Israel: A case study of one attempt to transform the place of Israel in Four St. Louis Synagogues," presented at Melton Centre for Jewish Education, Israel Education Conference, available at: <http://www.researchsuccess.com/documents/KIResearch.pdf>

The Jewish Federation of Greater Los Angeles Tel Aviv – Los Angeles Partnership, School Twinning program*

The work done by the Los Angeles Federation provides insights into the extent to which high school travel programs can integrate into a broader Israel engagement and broader community development strategy.

The Los Angeles Federation supports a school twinning program between 18 L.A. and 18 Tel Aviv schools as part of the Jewish Agency-sponsored Partnership 2000 program. The partnership framework focuses on creating networking relationships between Jews in Los Angeles and Tel Aviv in sectors as diverse as health and human service, environment, film and television, choreography, opera, the visual arts, and business. The school twinning program starts in 6th grade. One of the participating schools is a public high school, the rest are Jewish day schools.

Goals

The twinning program is based on a home hospitality model and the development of direct relationships between young Jews in Los Angeles and Tel Aviv. There is less emphasis on exposure to the history of Israel through the "traditional" bus tour, although several central tourist sites, such as Masada and the Kotel, are covered during the program. The organizer of the program states:

My daughter went on a youth movement program. It was a life-changing experience, but she didn't meet one Israeli and did not have to speak Hebrew once. The target of that program was to connect to Israel and not necessarily to the people of Israel. Our target is interaction with people.

Organization of the Travel Program

While focused exclusively on Los Angeles, the manner in which the L.A. Federation runs its Partnership program is structurally similar to Birthright and MASA. Like Birthright and MASA the Los Angeles Federation does not run the programs; rather, the Federation provides an enabling framework, including funding and loose content guidelines for schools to develop, mostly on their own terms, relationships with schools in Israel.

Los Angeles schools send over 300 high school students to Israel annually, with Tel Aviv schools sending a similar number to L.A. The length of the Israel travel part of the twinning program varies from two weeks for younger ages to two months in 10th grade. Each school decides on how many pupils travel and how many they can host. Each hosting school is responsible for the itinerary. The Partnership program has its own basic requirements, such as the focus on home hospitality and the requirement that each itinerary focus on a theme. The twin schools choose the theme together.

Each L.A. school has a Partnership coordinator who collaborates with his or her Tel Aviv counterpart to pick trip themes and build program itineraries. Some of the schools also work with consultants to help them structure their program. The staff of the 18 Los Angeles schools who are involved in the twinning program meet locally 6 times a year for the purpose of learning from one another. All the Los Angeles and Tel Aviv coordinators meet once a year for a ten-day program in Tel Aviv, with every third year meeting in Los Angeles.

Costs

Parents pay for airfare plus a small amount of the remaining cost. The Partnership pays for the program and staff. Each school gets a budget that they manage independently, placing responsibility for the program on the school. The Federation has donors who give directly to Partnership, for which a budget line is built into the Federation's annual budget. Parents may also apply for scholarship funds at the school or Federation.

Measures of Success

The LA Federation has carried out an evaluation of the twinning program alumni and found that 75% of the participants keep a connection with the friends they made in Israel. The program also contributes to an increase of visits by Los Angeles Jews to Israel and the number of schools participating in the program has dramatically increased. There is also greater awareness of Jewish identity issues in Tel Aviv schools as a result of Partnership. Overall, Partnership has brought modern Israel to Los Angeles students, especially in the areas of language and culture which students are now much more interested in, because "Israel is much more real."

*Based on interview with Ahuva Ron, Senior Education Director of International Programs at the Jewish Federation of Greater Los Angeles. Originally appeared in: Ezra Kopelowitz, Minna Wolf and Stephen Markowitz (2009) "High School Israel Experience Programs: A Policy-Oriented Analysis of the Field." Report commissioned by the Jewish Agency for Israel.

At the level of communities

Use of the Israel-Diaspora relationship for community wide, community building processes appear in a number of the case studies in this paper – see for example the work of the Toronto Federation (pg. 37), the Kehillah Partnership (pg. 38) and ICCY (pg. 34).

The largest framework for Israel-Diaspora interaction, with the principle of mutual benefit is the Jewish Agency’s Partnership 2000 framework which was first setup in the mid-1990s and as of 2007 was running 45 Partnerships in Israel with 550 Jewish communities around the world.⁷⁹ The most sophisticated of the partnership programs, such as those pursued by the Boston (CJP), Los Angeles and Toronto Federations use the partnership framework as a springboard for community development practices across many sectors of their local Jewish community with the express purpose of benefit for the local Jewish community while also building a sense of belonging to the global Jewish People.

JUDAISM AS RESOURCE: TEACHING TORAH

The final area of integration that we look at is the teaching of classic rabbinic texts, which is conducted in many Jewish institutions. Among the organizations contacted for this research we found a common innovative approach to the “teaching of Torah,” with two variations.

As discussed in the section on the religious sector, the common approach is not to emphasize a connection between the study of rabbinic texts and a particular Jewish way of life; rather, an emphasis is placed on the idea that study of the rabbinic tradition is a resource which is valuable asset for Jews pursuing a Jewish journey that is relevant and meaningful for their lives.

Pattern one: Independent access to rabbinical text

Some organizations, all of whom affiliate with a religious movement, focus on the skills an individual needs to independently approach classic rabbinical texts, interpret and apply them to his or her world. The goal is to enable the individual, drawing on traditional Jewish learning skills to pursue a Jewish journey enriched by tradition. See the Conservative Yeshiva case study on page 32 as an example. Chicagoland Jewish high school and the Chovevei Torah Yeshiva pursue similar educational methodologies.

⁷⁹ See, Andrea S. Arbel. “Partership with a Purpose,” The Jewish Agency for Israel. <http://www.jewishagency.org/NR/rdonlyres/3F595908-417B-4142-B788-9E8EA6843535/68925/247308jafiarticalA4engNEW.pdf>

Pattern Two: Topical learning

In most organizations communal/educational organizations such as supplementary Hebrew schools or adult education programs the pedagogical focus is not on skills, but rather on using a snippet of rabbinical text to teach a topic which sparks interesting, meaningful and relevant conversation which connects to other aspects of the participants lives. The Hillel, Senior Jewish Educator case study on this page provides an example of the topical approach.

In their essay on best practices in a Jewish supplementary school, Jack Wertheimer and Serena Victor explore the tension between the two methods.

In a course entitled “Jewish Lens: Exploring Values and Community through Photographs” students examine and interpret photographs by Israeli photographer Zion Ozeri to learn how photography can be used to express Jewish values, identity, community and tradition. The teacher projects images via computer onto a screen and asks his eighth and ninth graders to respond. In one discussion the teacher prods the class to work in small groups to consider the nature of community. ... Finally the teacher asks: How does the Talmudic pronouncement, ‘all of Israel are responsible for one another,’ apply to the picture?” It is the first time a Jewish text figures

Teaching Torah on Campus Hillel: The Foundation for Jewish Campus Life Senior Jewish Educators Initiative

Hillel provides an example of a community focused organization that actively integrates a pluralistic form of religion into its work. Most campus Hillels offer opportunities for prayer and Jewish learning and usually in a number of denominational formats. An example of Hillel’s approach is seen in the Senior Jewish Educators (SJE) initiative.

Starting in the 2007/8 academic year, Hillel began place SJE’s on campus. In the 2009/10 academic year 10 campuses are participating in the initiative. The role of the SJE is to serve as a focused educational resource for other Hillel staff and to provide students opportunities for meaningful Jewish experiences through Jewish learning. The SJE initiative has begun to develop educational methodologies for Jewish learning for young adults, part of which is a focus on teaching Torah.

When I use the term “text,” I mean Torah, which means something quite different than straightforward study of text. Torah is something unusually vital and transcendent. These texts are not about reading, but intellectual mode and discourse. What I think about when I sit with my students is not that we are going to do text study, but that we are entering into the ongoing Jewish conversation. What is essential is that we see ourselves as part of the conversation. I know my teaching session is a success if they are talking about the idea. If we use texts to create our own conversation, we have authentically entered into the Jewish tradition and have become shapers of that tradition, as part of the latest phase of the conversation.

... I’m not concerned with Jewish practice, but big questions and deep conversations. Judaism is an excellent medium for investigating the human experience. Over thousands of years the Jewish tradition has created a remarkable collection of reference points about the human experience. Judaism is a way for referencing that experience.

*Excerpts from interview with Rabbi David Kasher, U.C. Berkeley SJE, July 2009. The authors wish to thank the Jim Joseph Foundation for permission to use this material which was collected in a research project sponsored by the Foundation.

into the discussion.

The authors note:

“The discussions in this class conform to the pattern observed in a number of other courses that aim to spur students to consider Jewish values, as opposed to a close reading of Jewish texts. Classes on Jewish ethics and the like tend to pose, “what do you think?” types of questions to students and expose them to only a limited amount of traditional Jewish thinking.”⁸⁰

Wertheimer and Victor broach the issue of depth of Jewish education. The topical approach to the teaching of rabbinic text seems to be useful for capturing interest and creating a Jewish frame for contemporary concerns, especially if the goal is to launch someone on a Jewish journey that in the words of the Hillel, Senior Jewish Educator (see above case study) evokes “big questions” and enables “deep conversations.” The skills based approach seems necessary for enabling a person to truly pursue a long term Jewish journey that actively draws on the religious tradition.

TRAINING AND RETENTION OF PERSONNEL

Perhaps the greatest challenge facing organizations pushing forward the Peoplehood practices described in this paper is in the area of personnel. The Peoplehood educator or community organizer is first and foremost an enabler of others. He or she seeks out collaboration, creates a revenue stream to make access to programs affordable and actively devolves authority to others along the lines described in the pages above. In the vast majority of cases, the tendency of Jewish professionals is to work in the opposite direction.⁸¹

As with any period of historical change, the pioneers are normally charismatic individuals with a vision which is slowly routinized in the form of standard practice. Given that we are still in an early and formative period of the current stage in Jewish history, little is currently known about the recruiting, training and organizational practices needed nurture staff who will work within the Peoplehood paradigm.

There are programs, like many of the leadership programs mentioned above, that are designed to pull in new talent into the Jewish world or re-train staff already working in the field. For example, a primary goal of the Hillel Senior Jewish Educator initiative is to develop an

⁸⁰ Jack Wertheimer with Serena Victor (2009) “Putting the School back into the Supplementary Jewish High School,” in Jack Wertheimer (ed.) *Learning and Jewish Community: Jewish Supplementary Schools in the Twenty-First Century*. Boston: Brandeis University Press. P. 330

⁸¹ This argument is elaborated in the context of day school teachers by Zvi Bekerman and Ezra Kopelowitz (2008) “The unintended consequence of liberal Jewish schooling: A comparative case study of the teaching of Jewish texts for the purpose of cultural sustainability,” in Zvi Bekerman and Ezra Kopelowitz (ed.) *Cultural Education – Cultural Sustainability: Minority, Diaspora, Indigenous and Ethno-Religious Groups in Multicultural Societies*, Routledge, pp. 323-342.

understanding of the staffing requirements for doing Peoplehood education on campus. Another example is the I-Center which is training American Jewish educators so that they will best be able to build on the mifgash experience for the good of their students, organizations and communities. There have also been a growth of Jewish teacher education programs which are focused on training educators capable of working in pluralistic Jewish frameworks such as DeleT,⁸² the Shalom Hartman Institute's Melamdin program,⁸³ the Pardes's Educators program,⁸⁴ the curricula and pedagogy projects at the School for Jewish Peoplehood Studies of the Diaspora Museum⁸⁵ and the pre-service and in-service training programs conducted at the Department of Jewish Peoplehood – Oren, Shdemot as part of the school twinning programs they oversee. The Jim Joseph Foundation,⁸⁶ Avi Chai Foundation⁸⁷ and the Nadav Fund⁸⁸ are among the most active philanthropic supporters of this area of work in the Jewish World.

⁸² <http://www.delet.org/>

⁸³ http://hartman.org.il/Center_Edu/Program_View.asp?Program_Id=1

⁸⁴ <http://www.pardes.org.il/programs/educators/overview.php>

⁸⁵ <http://www.bh.org.il/educational-materials.aspx>

⁸⁶ <http://www.jimjosephfoundation.org/process.htm>

⁸⁷ <http://www.avi-chai.org/bin/enf1f7.html?enPage=BlankPage&enDisplay=view&enDispWhat=Zone&enZone=JLPST>

⁸⁸ <http://www.nadavfund.org.il/projects.html>

VII. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DEVELOPING THE FIELD OF JEWISH PEOPLEHOOD PRACTICE

This paper began by noting how discussion of the Jewish Peoplehood concept usually focuses on diminishing solidarity between Jews and is in effect a call for help. We have taken a different tack, focusing not on crisis, but on transformation and renewal. The organizations we show-case are pioneers, building Jewish Peoplehood in practice. Our goal has been to provide a foundational understanding of the phenomenon, by identifying a coherent field of practice and shining a guiding light on the core practices which others may model and further improve.

For Peoplehood practice to move beyond the pioneers and reach a critical mass of Jewish organizations there is a need for field development. According to the Bridgestone Group a field is: *A community of organizations and individuals: 1) working together towards a common goal, and 2) using a set of common approaches to achieving that goal.*⁸⁹ This paper establishes beyond a doubt that there is a community of organizations and individuals who fit Bridgestone’s definition; and hence, we can reasonably speak of developing the field of Jewish Peoplehood practice.

A field includes at least five dimensions depicted in the table below.⁹⁰

1. Shared Identity Community aligned around a common purpose and a set of core values			
2. Standards of Practice	3. Leadership and grass roots support	4. Revenue base and supporting policy	5. Knowledge Base
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Codification of standards of practice ▪ Exemplary models and resources (e.g., how-to guides) ▪ Available resources to support implementation (e.g., technical assistance) ▪ Respected credentialing/ongoing professional development training for practitioners and leaders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Influential leaders and exemplary organizations across key segments of the field (e.g., practitioners, researchers, business leaders, policymakers) ▪ Broad base of support from major constituencies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Revenue model, including organized funding streams from public, philanthropic and corporate sources of support, or revenue generated from fees for service, membership or other models. ▪ Enabling policy environment that supports and encourages model practices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Credible evidence that practice achieves desired outcomes ▪ Community of researchers to study and advance practice ▪ Vehicles to collect, analyze, debate and disseminate knowledge ▪ Think tanks

Each of the five dimensions requires systematic development with support from the major Jewish stakeholders representing national and regional, communal and philanthropic

⁸⁹ The Bridgespan Group (July 2009) *The Strong Field Framework: A Guide and Toolkit for Funders and Nonprofits Committed to Large-Scale Impact*, p. 2.

⁹⁰ Adapted from: The Bridgespan Group (July 2009) *The Strong Field Framework: A Guide and Toolkit for Funders and Nonprofits Committed to Large-Scale Impact*, p. 5.

organizations. Drawing on the research presented in this paper, we offer some initial recommendations for the purpose of pushing the field of Jewish Peoplehood practice forward.

1. SHARED IDENTITY COMMUNITY ALIGNED AROUND A COMMON PURPOSE AND A SET OF CORE VALUES

The historical overview given at the start of the paper and then again within each of sections devoted to religion, education and community anchors our argument that there is a new understanding of “Jewish collectivity” afoot, which consciously combines the idea of “Jewish pluralism” with “collective Jewish belonging.” This development represents a new phase of Jewish history. Since the 1980s the Jewish World is witnessing the steady growth of an incipient community of organizations and practitioners all of whom are working with the goal of promoting belonging anchored on a pluralistic conception of Jewish collectivity. “The Jewish Peoplehood” concept came of age during this period, and hence provides us with a hook for giving the broader phenomenon a name and identifying its key features.

The shared identity, common purpose and core values of Peoplehood organizations revolve around Jewish pluralism. Peoplehood organizations are either internally pluralistic, by design serving Jews from across their Jewish communities, or alternatively focused on enabling their constituents to work with other Jews to build a broader inclusive Jewish public sphere.

However, if we look beyond these basic core values, the “field” of Jewish Peoplehood practice is at best in a formative stage. On one hand, the field exists, it is real. There is a critical mass of pioneers working to push forward the practices described in this paper. On the other hand, the full extent to which pluralistic practices, which are anchored in Jewish collectivity, have spread has not received formal recognition; and, as a result Peoplehood practices are not receiving the full support that ought to be coming from the government of Israel, national Jewish organizations, federations and foundations.

Recommendation

A shared identity implies, amongst others, a clear articulation and understanding of the field and the purpose of the field builders. While progress has been made a lot of ambiguity still surrounds the concept of Peoplehood, its meaning and significance. An effort should be made to develop a language of Peoplehood through a set of concepts which clarify rather than confuse both the change agents and their constituencies. The encouraging sign from the last two decades is that issues pertaining to collective Jewish belonging are gradually moving towards the forefront of the Jewish agenda. Yet our evolving understanding of the issues and the challenges they pose depends largely on developing a global conversation.

Resources should be made available to enable and deepen intellectual and practice oriented discourse on Peoplehood. A funding body or national level organization that wants to further the cause of collective Jewish belonging should actively seek out those who are pushing

forward the values of Jewish Peoplehood identified in this paper and support them. These organizations are the key to our future as a People. Before making a funding decision or a decision having to do with allocation of organizational resources, ask: “Are we enabling the Jewish Peoplehood practice?”

2. STANDARDS OF PRACTICE

The primary contribution this paper is to provide a formative description of core Peoplehood practices and an initial sense of what constitutes excellence in the field. We have learned that a key component of a pluralistic approach to Jewish collectivity is the focus on enabling each individual’s on-going Jewish journey in a collective context. Peoplehood organizations provide access points to Jewish community, which are meaningful to individuals. Once individuals view participation in Jewish community as relevant to their lives, the Peoplehood organization provides them with a trajectory which includes acquisition of knowledge, skills and know-how needed to intensify participation in Jewish community and commitment to the global Jewish People.

The dialectic of individual journey within collective context has been examined from the perspective of particular sectors of Jewish organizational life – education, religion and communal; and, in terms of general best practices having to do with program design, access to Jewish community, integration of key secular and Jewish processes to support consistent exposure to Jewish collectivity, and the recruitment, training and retention of qualified personnel.

Recommendation

Strong standards of practice rely heavily on a strategic understanding of what the field is trying to achieve. As we have shown by introducing the concept of "Peoplehood consciousness", a shared understanding of goals is not yet happening within the pioneering group of Peoplehood organizations (let alone among the broader orbit of the Jewish world). A focused effort should be made to articulate the goals of Peoplehood practice and the development of strategies relevant to different constituencies. To the degree that there are differences over the goals of Peoplehood education, they serve as a blessing to the extent that the different positions are made explicit and put on the table for debate and discussion.

The standards of practice identified in this paper are a first drop in the bucket. Future development of the field requires continuous discussion regarding standards of Peoplehood practice in the particular contexts of each organization’s work. Equally important is the big picture. As we have seen, there are common attributes to the work of all Peoplehood organizations. Continued development of a global understanding of Peoplehood practice must inform any particular discussion.

3. LEADERSHIP AND GRASS ROOTS SUPPORT

Jewish Peoplehood practice is a bottom-up phenomenon. The pioneering organizations that we describe in this paper are driven by leaders with intellectual vision and the ability to garner support for their work. Only in the past decade has there been a growth of organizing frameworks that are now providing top-down support with the focused goal of seeding the field with new initiatives and scaling existing successes.

The greatest push to date, has been in the educational sector, where organizations like RAVSAK, Meitarim, Limmud International, Partnership 2000 and Oranim College have identified their core mission as focused on what we have labeled here as Peoplehood practice. While, we have described religious and communal organizations who are increasingly applying Peoplehood principles to their work, it seems to us that outside of isolated cases in each sector, most national or international organizations are only just beginning to understand that Peoplehood practice must become the backbone of their work and not an isolated program or initiative.

Recommendation

To build Jewish Peoplehood, organizations must approach their work in a holistic fashion, integrating different areas of work in order to create a continuity of experience for individual constituents with the Jewish collective. Moreover, Peoplehood practice demands collaboration and long-term vision. One organization alone cannot create the life-long journey of an individual with other Jews. Integration and collaboration are very difficult tasks to accomplish, demanding dedicated staff and financial resources.

An organization in which staff are provided with the required time and rewarded for collaboration and integration is an organization in which Peoplehood standards are viewed as central means for determining success. Resources and reward come from internal organizational policies, but also arrive in the form of philanthropic recognition of the effort required at integration and collaboration, and support from national organizations. Such support requires recognition of integration and collaboration, rather than number of participants in a particular program, as guidelines for grant making. In other words, a fundamental shift is required in the thinking of philanthropic and national organizations in the manner in which they discern and support Jewish organizations working in the field.

Beyond constituents and staff, an organization's leadership also needs to be part of the Peoplehood journey. Lay and professional leaders need to engage in an educational process involving the revisiting of the organizational vision or mission statement (strategic process) and be privy to thinking, hesitations and debate about implementation of the vision in practice. The result will be to re-energize leadership and bring to the table additional leaders and supporters who are attracted to the Peoplehood mission and want to support it.

4. REVENUE BASE AND SUPPORTING POLICY

Peoplehood is a sustainable enterprise to the extent that integrative and collaborative forms of Jewish practice are core to the organizations work, which requires a revenue base that supports these practices. Some of the Peoplehood organizations show-cased in this paper have gone a long way towards redesigning the economic basis of their organization in order that it directly supports Peoplehood practice.

Recommendation

Peoplehood organizations should take a holistic approach for generating revenue to support their work – this includes mixing philanthropy, with fees for service and other types of community based fund-raising. Moreover, revenue sources and the mission, branding, hiring and program implementation support one another. Case studies featured in this paper, such as the Jewish Community Project, Yeshivat Hadar and the Kehillah Partnership provide examples of organizations whose business plan includes these multi-layered revenue strategies which are most likely to sustain long-term Peoplehood practice.

It is our belief that integrating Peoplehood into the vision and life of organizations can broaden the funding base and strengthen the commitment of the existing leadership. The important point is that to the extent that Peoplehood programming depends solely on short term philanthropic grants, or subsidies from other areas of the organizations work, it is unlikely to sustain itself into the future.

5. KNOWLEDGE BASE

This paper represents the only existing research document which is entirely focused on Peoplehood practice in Jewish organizations. All of the above requires solid empirical research combined with think tank style discussion within and between organizations. Additional research is vital, both for confirming or refuting assumptions upon which the field, including statements in this paper, are built.

Recommendation

The best practices detailed in this paper are the basis for devising measures of success. Jewish professionals, lay leaders and funders should insist on clear measures for determining success. Is the work of an organization producing Peoplehood consciousness? In order to confirm that question, collection and discussion of data is required. The best practices detailed in this paper and the check list and discussion guide provided in appendix one provide the basis for beginning that process.

RESPONSES

On May 15th, 2010 a webinar, sponsored by the Jewish Peoplehood Hub, was held to discuss this paper. The following three papers were written as responses. All three address the question: Is “Peoplehood Consciousness” a useful concept? The respondents were asked:

- Do you find the concept of "Peoplehood Consciousness" relevant for your work? If so, how? If not, why? Would you propose an alternative master concept?
- We [Kopelowitz and Ravid] will claim that there are four core practices upon which Peoplehood Consciousness depends. Do you agree? If not, why and how would you improve our understanding of the parameters upon which Peoplehood Consciousness is built?

DAVID BRYFMAN

The report is excellent in that it outlines a good understanding of what Jewish Peoplehood means and how it can be translated into action by educational institutions. I believe that it also raises many tensions that need to be discussed in order to advance the place and role of Jewish Peoplehood in the landscape of Jewish communal life.

I have presented these tensions as dichotomous ends of a spectrum, although as with most issues in education they are far from black and white and deserve nuanced and thoughtful debate.

Tension #1: Theory Versus Action

Jewish educators in the field are struggling to make meaning and actualize the growing amount of literature about Jewish Peoplehood written primarily from a theoretical standpoint. The emphasis in the report on the term *Peoplehood consciousness* itself may further exacerbate the separation of a theoretical understanding of Jewish Peoplehood from an on-the-ground understanding of how it should be implemented. Perhaps the term consciousness should be coupled with another word such as “action,” “doing,” or “behavior.” The term *praxis* as suggested by David Mittelberg, in his response, is useful although still academic in nature and may not speak to the educator on the ground. At the end of the day consciousness and theory will not be enough to advance the field of Jewish Peoplehood.

Tension #2: Universal Versus Particular

Here it must be understood that there are geographic differences surrounding what it means to be Jewish in the 21st century. For communities where the dominant force within the Jewish community remains its very survival then Jewish Peoplehood becomes instinctively a very particular notion. Adapting the adage of *kol yisrael areivim zeh ba zeh* not only makes sense but is critical for these communities. In other communities, in particular I refer to the youth and young adult communities of North America, Jewish Peoplehood can, and has, been interpreted

as an insular, and sometimes racist, notion. For this population often terms such as the *chosen people* and *or la goyim* do not resonate. This might also be a generational divide, which is interesting to acknowledge given that the bulk of philanthropic dollars is still being driven by a population for whom the particular survivalist message of why be Jewish is still the dominant paradigm by which they live and operate. The key question that the Jewish Peoplehood movement must ask is, in the 21st century can you be both a member of the Tribe and a Global citizen?

Tension #3: Jewish Peoplehood Versus Zionism

It is clear that pluralism is central to an understanding of Jewish Peoplehood. Pluralism entails mutual respect which is more than simply tolerance of other people's world views. Most commonly it has been applied bridging between or mitigating the importance of denominations in Judaism, which is definitely a core element of bringing the Jewish people closer together. However, as well as being trans-denominational, the Jewish Peoplehood movement must reconcile distinctions and differences between Jewish communities all around the world. While the same organizations who promote Jewish Peoplehood also declare that Israel is the central community of Jewish life in the world today, integral to Jewish identity, and promote Aliya, it will be difficult to convince others that Jewish Peoplehood is not just a new, more palatable term, to advance the Zionist agenda,

It is my belief that unless we openly discuss and come to terms (perhaps even make some concrete statements) about these issues it is difficult to see how the term Jewish Peoplehood can have widely accepted value in Jewish communities all around the world.

David Bryfman is currently the Director of the New Center for Collaborative Leadership at the Board of Jewish Education of Greater New York-SAJES. David recently completed his Ph.D. Education and Jewish Studies at NYU focusing on the development of Jewish adolescent identity development and experiential Jewish Education. David has worked extensively in formal and informal Jewish educational institutions in Australia, Israel, and North America. In Australia he was the Director of Informal Jewish Education at a large Jewish day school, a Hillel Director, the Director of Birthright Israel in Australia and several other Israel experience programs. David lived in St. Louis for two years where he was the Director of the Central Agency's Community Supplementary High School and Teen Initiative Programs. David is a graduate of Brandeis University's Informal Jewish Education Leadership Seminar and Jewish Education Leadership Seminar. David has most recently worked for JEXNET, MAKOM and the Israel Caravan for Democracy as an Israel Educator, and is currently an educational consultant for the iCenter.

LISA GRANT

Ezra Kopelowitz and Shlomi Ravid are engaging in groundbreaking work to define the field of Jewish Peoplehood education as demonstrated in this paper. The research, based on conversations with key contacts in 35 organizations around the globe, makes an important distinction between Peoplehood “experiences” which tend to be primarily focused on creating a powerful social interaction among Jews, and Peoplehood “consciousness” which is an internalized commitment to the Jewish collective that extends beyond the immediate interaction (Kopelowitz and Ravid, 2010, p. 10). They conclude that Peoplehood experiences are an essential element but the richer, more multi-layered, and ongoing work of building ‘Peoplehood consciousness’ is what is critical for promoting a lasting commitment to and will to act to contribute to collective Jewish belonging.

Kopelowitz and Ravid define Peoplehood consciousness through a classical educational paradigm that incorporates affective, cognitive, and practical dimensions. In other words, organizations that educate towards Peoplehood consciousness need to provide ongoing experiences and frameworks where Jewish Peoplehood can be felt, understood, and lived. They further claim that to be effective this work has to take place within a pluralistic stance that allows for a broad conception of Jewish community that embraces multiple forms of Jewish expression. In a related vein, they note that the emphasis of Peoplehood consciousness is on enabling individual Jews to pursue their Jewish “journey” in the company of others but not necessarily within a particular ideological frame or prescribed Jewish life style.

The findings from this research provide a solid foundation on which to begin the challenging and creative work of designing educational programs. To be sure, a number of key questions still need to be considered as we move from the conceptualization of best practices in Jewish Peoplehood education to their implementation. In this reflection on their work, I want to focus on two of these questions.

1. How do we privilege the particularity of Jewish Peoplehood in a pluralistic frame?

American Jews, like their non-Jewish neighbors, tend to embrace values and experiences that appeal to the universal and the personal. They are much more likely to approach the particular through a hermeneutic of suspicion. Particularism smacks of exclusivity and prescribed boundaries of who is in and who is out. As more and more American Jews become part of interfaith families, the power of the particular is losing ground. And yet, Jewish Peoplehood demands allegiance to a particular group, even if it is open to a wide array of different Jewish beliefs and practices. Thus, we are caught in something of a conundrum. If Peoplehood consciousness is to take root among contemporary American Jews, it needs to be an inclusive idea that actively welcomes Jews from diverse backgrounds and experiences. But, its very inclusivity may challenge its acceptance as a unifying idea. From the perspective of denominational and ideological educators, it may be perceived as a force competing against

their desire to induct learners into a particular Jewish worldview and way of living. And the Universalists may not be able to distinguish sufficiently between an open, flexible, inclusive view of the Jewish collective and a basic appreciation for all of humanity. In other words, Jewish Peoplehood as a core value may simply be perceived as unnecessary or irrelevant to living a meaningful life, Jewish or otherwise.

2. Where is the “right” balance between affective and cognitive dimensions of Peoplehood education?

In a related work, Shlomi Ravid and I are exploring how to develop a Peoplehood pedagogy of commitment. There, we suggest that most current Peoplehood programs are too focused on the immediacy of the peak experience and do not have a clear enough appreciation of the need to teach towards a deeper Peoplehood consciousness. It seems that developing such a "consciousness" requires the intellectual work of making meaning from these experiences. This is more about evolutionary change than revolutionary change. Certainly, ongoing *experiences* of Jewish Peoplehood must be part of the process in order to establish a plausibility structure that supports meaning making. However, the experiences themselves remain outside of the self until they are internalized through a process of dialogue and reflection, which is also a social and emotional experience that connects an individual to other Jews – an outward movement. In contrast, fostering commitment through consciousness demands a process of reconfiguring value systems. That focus, through reflection, is *inward*. The trick is to determine the timing and interplay between the inward and outward movements in order to maximize the potential for participants to grow.

We should not seek clear answers to the challenge of locating a place for particularism between the universal and the personal, and finding a good balance between the inward and outward, and the cognitive and the affective. This is an educational task best achieved in conversation, experimentation, and evaluation among program designers, educators, and researchers. Indeed, the questions raised by other colleagues in response to this work will continue to spark a fruitful conversation that will help to further integrate theory and action as we develop the field of Jewish Peoplehood education together.

Lisa D. Grant is an Associate Professor of Jewish Education at Hebrew Union College. She holds an M.B.A. from the University of Massachusetts and a Ph.D. in Jewish Education from the Jewish Theological Seminary. Prior to joining the HUC faculty, she served as Evaluation and Pilot Project Manager at the Melton Research Center for Jewish Education. Her research and teaching interests include adult Jewish learning, professional development of Jewish educators, organizational change, and the role of Israel in American Jewish life. Her recent publications include, “The Place of Israel in the Identity of Reform Jews,” coauthored with Michael Marmor, in Danny Ben Moshe, editor, *Israel, World Jewry, and Identity*. London: Sussex Academic Press (2007); Grant, Lisa D. “Sacred Vision, Complex Reality: Navigating the Tensions in Israel Education.” *Jewish Educational Leadership*, Vol. 7:1, Fall 2008, 22-27; "Evaluation Study of the Israel on Campus Coalition". Co-authored with Ezra Kopelowitz. Report prepared for the Charles and Lynn Schusterman Family Foundation, July 2009.

DAVID MITTELBERG

The concept of *Jewish peoplehood*, helped me, personally in 1999, to move from the 1980's paradigm of Israel Experience to the concept of the interpersonal or inter-group mifgash/encounter. The former emphasized the impact of visiting Israel on the identity of Diaspora Jews, while the latter focuses on the impact on the Jewish identity of *both* Israeli and Diaspora participants in an educational program. This shift from one paradigm to the other, led me to inquire into ways that reciprocity, mutuality and symmetry of the mifgash encounter serves to enable a heightened sense of belonging to the Jewish people.

What worries me a little in this document is the over emphasis, in my view partly misplaced, on the concept of Jewish Peoplehood *consciousness*. The concept is very understandable as a bridging concept between certain ideologies. For example, a Marxist kibbutznik drawing on the notion of class consciousness as a predictor of social action, and a Conservative Jew thinking about theological consciousness as a locus of commandment and then commitment. However, the concept of Peoplehood consciousness is problematic for it restricts the discourse to the realm of identity and belief, without indicating the social sources for those beliefs, or their social relevance.

I would prefer, therefore, to adopt a framework of the later Marx (and others) and invoke the paradigm of Jewish peoplehood *praxis*, rather than that of Jewish Peoplehood *consciousness*. Praxis is a concept which demands the continual integration between theory and action in one framework; it is thus not limited to just the subjective mode of social consciousness, but includes the social structure within which one acts. The paradigm was utilized by those who sought to explain how social structure could be changed. Those of us who view with ambition the possibilities of Jewish peoplehood, want not only to change consciousness, but also to affect the very structures of the Jewish world.

Certainly the authors of the document understand this notion quite well, as their definition of consciousness includes emotion, intellect and *action*. Moreover, consciousness as defined by the authors is anchored in four *practices*:

1. A broad, non-provincial notion of community, hopefully transnational
2. A pluralistic pedagogy, broadly inclusive
3. Conceptualizing the personal Jewish journey within a collective context and not in the solipsistic *Jew Within* world
4. A framework for concrete commitment and *action*.

However as the authors know, my view is that they do not go far enough and thus risk the danger of being reduced to a new religion competing with synagogue collectivism on one hand and solipsistic individualism on the other. I see this as a lost cause.

The statement that I wish to offer is, “the reconstruction of the Jewish communal landscape must occur, if we are to reconstruct the Jewish mindscape. NOT THE OTHER WAY ROUND.”

I therefore do concur with the authors that we begin with the individual in his /her social milieu. Second, we must include, the interpersonal encounter of a Jewish transnational dimension between Jews the world over, pluralistically and inclusively defined. Finally we need to seek a deep understanding of, and strategy for change of the institutional praxis that enables local, national and international relationships between Jews. For this to occur, Jewish institutions worldwide must operate in a manner that develops transnational interaction embedded in local institutions, thereby promoting interdependence, collaboration and interaction, making possible a sustainable institutional infrastructure for glocal Jewish peoplehood.

I have been asked to relate these concepts to the programmatic example of school twinning that is also referred to, in the document under review. School twinning provides an authentic (for the participants), existential platform for the construction and deconstruction of Jewish peoplehood consciousness. Although as the authors report, most often the *mifgash* succeeds only in meeting the first of three conditions they have set, namely the social experience of peoplehood (see p 41). The authors correctly point out that the school encounter serves as a potential and natural site for the second condition: a continuous journey which extends past the particular educational program, to an ongoing experience of the student and teacher at the school.

The power of the school twinning model, is that it offers opportunities for teachers, students and parents to enter into a continuous and structured relationship within which they are able to articulate, along many dimensions, a Jewish peoplehood consciousness. Given the rich educational and social environment provided by a school and its interface with family and local community, it is possible to mine the shared and overlapping cultural symbols and heritage all of the participants share, on both the Israeli and American sides. The institutional partnership between schools opens participants to the broader cultural experience. Both sides share a familiar institutional context namely, a school, which has structurally recognizable similarities to pupils from both sides. This fact enhances the possibility of bridging other wide cultural differences and also serves as a place where shared culture can be developed and maintained. The result is the ability to evoke and actualize a meaningful educational context, in which all involved engage with the commandments and commitments of Global Jewish peoplehood consciousness.

You may ask whether the pursuit of Jewish peoplehood is a relevant goal for Diaspora young adults, who are barely affiliated to their local Jewish community and whose sights are, in the best of cases, set to redeem the Global - Universal (non Jewish) world? Will, perhaps, this concept of "Jewish Peoplehood" represent merely a regressive tribalism rather than a progressive liberal modernism to contemporary youth? In my view, Jewish Peoplehood offers the definitive opportunity, if it is constructed in the appropriate way, to position the global dimension as an entry point into Jewish life. We used to say, people begin in the home, go into the community and then finally grow into the big world. But I think we have to radically rethink the way we see the path of Jewish life. Global and transnational relationships can intensify local intra- communal relationships. To realize this vision we must rephrase our ideology. If, for example, Jewish institutions are linked in an existential way with communities around the world, then children will be socialized into a broad understanding of Jewish collectivity. This "glocal relationship" will be neither just global nor just local, and extend beyond a bifurcated relationship where local is what we do when we are acting Jewish, while Global is what we do in the non- Jewish world. We need to talk about building a glocal Jewish identity, achieved not by browbeating, but by building a Jewish institutional world where communities world wide are linked laterally with each other and pivotally with Israel. In that interconnected world, Jewish Peoplehood consciousness will naturally occur.

Looking down the road a decade or two, certainly a generation, I foresee the possibility that the proliferation of multi-national relationships, which will demand a new form of governance of the Jewish people that may well undermine some current institutions of Global Jewry. In their stead, perhaps, radically new global institutions will arise, appropriate to Jewish life in the 21st century to sustain us as a Jewish people.

David Mittelberg is Senior Lecturer and former Head of the Department of Sociology at Oranim, The Academic College of Education, where he is also Senior Consultant for Shdemot, Center for Community Leadership. David also serves as a Senior Research Fellow at the Institute for Kibbutz Research at Haifa University, Israel, where he formerly served as its Director. He is the author of *Strangers in Paradise: The Israeli Kibbutz Experience* (1988); *The Israel Connection and American Jews* (1999); *Between Two Worlds: The Testimony and the Testament*, (2004); and, has published articles on ethnicity, migration, gender, tourism, kibbutz education and the sociology of American Jewry.

APPENDIX ONE - PEOPLEHOOD CHECKLIST FOR THE PURPOSE OF DISCUSSION AND PLANNING

Use this discussion guide to conduct a discussion on the following two question areas:

1. **Is your organization building Jewish Peoplehood?**
2. If you feel that the criteria offered in this paper are insufficient or misrepresent your organization's understanding of Jewish Peoplehood:
 - **What are alternative criteria?**
 - **How does your organization understand Jewish Peoplehood and what needs to change in the discussion questions offered below?**

TOPIC 1: ORGANIZATIONAL MISSION: PEOPLEHOOD CONSCIOUSNESS

General question:

Does your organization's mission include the goal of building, "Peoplehood consciousness"?

Implementation questions:

Does your organization view as central to its mission the development of Peoplehood in terms of ...

1. **Emotion**
...an emotional sense of being part of the Jewish People?
2. **Intellect and know-how**
... knowledge and skills which enable participants to continue on their Jewish journeys in the company of other Jews?
3. **Action**
... practical contexts which enable individuals to act as a Jew on behalf of the Jewish collective in an on-going fashion?

Preparatory reading in this paper on Peoplehood consciousness

Core Peoplehood quality: Peoplehood Consciousness, starting on pg. 10

TOPIC 2: STRATEGY FOR BUILDING PEOPLEHOOD CONSCIOUSNESS

General Question (assumes discussion of topic one):

How does your organization build Peoplehood consciousness?

Implementation question:

Does your organization have a developed pedagogical or community building strategy for enabling ...

Preparatory reading in this paper on building Peoplehood consciousness

Section V provides a general overview of Peoplehood practices in three sectors. Read the sector(s) within which your organization works.

- Education starting on pg. 17
- Religion, starting on pg. 26
- Community starting on pg. 32

1. Collectivity

... a broad conception of Jewish community / collectivity which extends beyond participation in programs offered by your organization?

2. Inclusiveness

... pluralistic belonging to the Jewish community, which includes Jews from a variety of backgrounds?

3. Individuality in collective context

... each individual's on-going Jewish journey, in a manner meaningful and unique to that person; but, in the company of other Jews with commitment to contributing to local and global Jewish community?

TOPIC 3: ORGANIZATIONAL QUESTIONS

How do the areas of Peoplehood discussed in topics one and two above gain practical expression in the areas of ...

1. Program Design?

Preparatory reading in this paper on program design

- The difference between Peoplehood experience and Peoplehood consciousness, starting on pg. 10
- Programs designed to build Peoplehood consciousness, starting on pg. 40

2. Enabling access to Jewish community, in terms:

- **Affordability?**
- **Authority?**

Preparatory reading in this paper on making Jewish collectivity accessible

- Enabling access to Jewish community, starting on pg. 44

3. Integration of key secular and Jewish processes to support consistent exposure to Jewish collectivity?

Preparatory reading in this paper on the integration of organizational processes in support of Jewish collectivity

- Section starting on pg. 47.

4. Recruitment, training and retention of qualified personnel?

Preparatory reading in this paper on personnel

- Section on Training and retention of personnel, starting on pg. 55

APPENDIX TWO - SOME THOUGHTS ON THE IMPACT OF NATIONAL CONTEXT

An original intent of this research project was to explore in-depth the impact of national location on the way organizations work to further Jewish Peoplehood. The reality is that the lack of a developed literature on most Jewish communities outside of the Israel and the United States makes such work difficult and demands greater resources than possible within the framework of this project. Even within the American and Israeli contexts the recent and formative nature of the Peoplehood phenomena meant a time consuming process, well beyond our initial expectation, of fitting together the pieces in order to understand the broader picture in those two countries.

Nevertheless, we want to note the importance of a comparative national perspective, beyond that provided in this paper. David Mittleberg gives an eloquent perspective on this issue.

It is important to note that not all the Jewish Diasporas follow the American mould. In contrast to American data, 88% of young British Jews aged 16 to 30 years old agreed somewhat or strongly with the following statement: "I have a strong sense of belonging to the Jewish people." In Australia, the notion of Jewish Peoplehood is so un-problematical it requires no unique language and is expressed in the notion of being a Zionist. This is so in the majority of the Jewish day schools and also in the wider community. So much so, that in the current nationwide survey not a single question was asked concerning Jewish Peoplehood. Instead all respondents were asked —Do you regard yourself as a Zionist? By the term Zionist we mean that you feel connected to the Jewish people, to Jewish history, culture and beliefs, the Hebrew language and the Jewish homeland, Israel. To which 82%, of a national sample of 2,758 respondents replied yes.⁹¹

Indeed, as Mittleberg points out, we know that the Peoplehood concept is seldom used in an intensive and focused manner outside of the United States and Israel. The reasons suggested by Mittleberg are the relatively stronger and perhaps homogeneous connection to Jewish collective which exists in many of the smaller national Jewish communities.

To what extent does the lack of use of explicit Peoplehood language also reflect a corresponding lack of innovative practices which we have used the Peoplehood concept to highlight? Two areas in which this question might lead, point to the importance of comparative research.

⁹¹ David Mittelberg, Ibid.

1. Orthodox opposition

In many European countries or African communities there is either a government supported or de-facto hegemony of “an Orthodox establishment,” which usually regards with suspicion the pluralistic practices of the types we are associating with the Jewish Peoplehood concept. For example, until recently, British communal life was dominated by the Orthodox dominated *Board of Deputies of British Jews* and associated synagogues, the vast majority of which are Orthodox. The two British case studies developed for this report, provide illustrative examples of the impact of the Orthodox dominated character of the British Jewish community on organizations which wish to further pluralistic Jewish practices.

The development of Limmud United Kingdom came about in a direct confrontation with the established Orthodox community, which actively opposed Limmud in its formative stage, to the point of organizing an alternative learning festival to blunt Limmud’s growth. Only after failing in the attempt and after tremendous effort at out-reach on the part of the Limmud leadership has a *modus vivendi* been achieved.

The JCC for London is the first London JCC founded in 2004, in a city in which communal life has until recently revolved around synagogues. As opposed to many of the American and Israeli Peoplehood organizations which are innovating in the area of religion, the JCC for London actively distances itself from all matters deemed religious – a direct response to the socio-political and cultural context in which it is operating. The vision statement of the JCC for London, reads:

Who is the JCC for?

The JCC for London celebrates Jewish culture. It is also inclusive: it’s for anyone interested in Jewish life and our programme of Jewish activities. It is not a place of worship, nor linked to any particular group, movement or synagogue. It’s a gateway into all things Jewish: from food to sport to the arts to debate, with an emphasis on the Jewish tradition of helping those in need. It’s a great place for Jews of all ages to meet other Jews; it’s a way of building a strong Jewish future for us and for our children. The JCC actively welcomes observant and secular Jews, mixed partnerships, and non-Jews. Indeed, an important part of our vision is to create better understanding between different faiths and cultures. <http://www.jcclondon.org.uk/Vision.html>

It is clear from these two examples, that there must be implications for the development of the character of Jewish collectivity in Orthodox dominated Jewish communities. What the implications are depends on further research.

2. Issue of volunteer culture

A second area that is cardinal for the success of Peoplehood organizations is the existence of a culture of support for volunteer activity. Jewish Peoplehood practices aim at supporting

individuals who voluntarily opt into Jewish life and seek to contribute to the local and global Jewish communities.

In the former Soviet Union a challenge for organizations like the Joint Distribution Committee and Limmud FSU has been to nurture a culture of voluntarism. One of the goals of the leadership development strategies sponsored by the two organizations has been to nurture a cadre of volunteer leaders for the communities of FSU Jewry. However, the nature of volunteerism as a core concern for the field of Jewish Peoplehood goes well beyond the FSU. Many affiliation era organizations in Western countries are reporting a drop in the numbers of people willing to devote time as lay leaders. To what degree is a lack of Jewish volunteering a problem? Does the problem differ from one country to the next? If so, to what extent are the sources for declining levels of volunteerism tied to local communal conditions, national culture or broader changes in post-modern society? How should strategies at increasing volunteerism adjust to local conditions? Finally, do the emerging communities and new forms of organizations featured in this report also suffer for lack of volunteers, or have the Peoplehood practices they have instituted solved the problem?

Comparative questions of the type, should certainly inform future research on the field of Peoplehood practice.

APPENDIX THREE: ORGANIZATIONS CONTACTED FOR RESEARCH

Country	Primary Category	Case study
Israel	Academia	Oranim College
England	Adult ed.	Limmud United Kingdom
FSU	Adult ed.	Limmud FSU
USA	Adult ed.	Limmud Los Angeles
USA	Adult ed.	The Wexner Foundation: The Wexner Heritage Program
USA	Adult ed.	Hillel: The Foundation for Jewish Campus Life. Senior Jewish Educator and Campus Entrepreneur Initiatives
USA	Camping	Camp Ramah in Wisconsin
USA	Community	The Kavana Cooperative
USA	Community	The Kehillah Partnership
USA	Federation	Combined Jewish Philanthropies, Boston
Canada	Federation	UJA Federation of Greater Toronto
England	JCC	JCC for London
USA	JCC	Jewish Community Project
Israel	JCC	International Culture and Community Center
Intrntnl	Mifgashim	World Confederation of Jewish Community WJCC - Tri Center
USA / Israel	Mifgashim	The Jewish Federation of Greater Los Angeles, Tel Aviv – Los Angeles Partnership, School Twinning program
USA	Religious ed.	Yeshivat Chovevei Torah
Israel	Religious ed.	The Conservative Yeshiva, Project of the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism
USA	Schools	Chicagoland Jewish High School
Israel	Schools	Meitarim Network for Jewish Democratic Education
USA	Schools	Ravsak: The Jewish Community Day School Network
FSU	Welfare	Joint Distribution Committee - Former Soviet Union (FSU) Regional Strategy